Post-War Productions of

Hamlet

at Stratford-upon-Avon

1948 - 1970

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SYNOPSIS

This thesis offers a detailed, analytical account of six post-war productions of Hamlet, presented in the main house of The Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, later The Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, in the years 1948, 1956, 1958, 1961, 1965 and 1970. Each production is separately considered to determine the ways in which its director has reflected changing theatrical styles and attitudes to the interpretation of the central character. The accounts are based upon the evidence of prompt books, production records and contemporary reviews. Each chapter follows the course of the play and is supported by an appendix giving details of the text used, and listing cuts and textual variations. The appendices also contain cast-lists, with details of production personnel, together with lists of the plays produced in each respective season. Selected diagrams, ground-plots and information reproduced from production records are also included.

This thesis contains approximately 50,000 words.

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ILLUSTRATIONS

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NOTES

The text referred to throughout is The New Shakespeare Hamlet, edited by John Dover Wilson (London, 1969), except where otherwise stated.

When the terms "Right" and "Left" are used to indicate a stage position, they refer to the actor's right and left as he faces the audience. "Up stage" and "Down stage" refer to the back and front of the stage respectively.

INTRODUCTION

> "Hamlet is one of mankind's great images. It turns a new face to each century, even to each decade. It is a mirror which gives back the reflection of the age that is contemplating it."[1]

Peter Hall gave a talk to his company at the outset of rehearsals for Hamlet in 1965, in which he outlined his own ideas about the play. In so doing, he examined the special place which Hamlet occupies in the history of the theatre. His contention was that the play provides a focus, not only for theatrical styles, but for contemporary society's own attitudes. Jan Kott saw the play as absorbing all the problems of our time; C.S. Lewis saw its hero as Everyman, bowed beneath the weight of original sin. Both, in common with Hall, point to the tendency to see more in Hamlet than a simple examination of the fate of its protagonists. Kenneth Muir, speaking to the Theatre Summer School at Stratford in 1965, identified this as a peculiarly modern attitude, the play having been presented without problem, he felt, for the first two hundred years of its existence. His own view was that "Hamlet is a play about the mystery and impenetrability of human personality".[2]

Directors, actors and audiences have approached the play hoping to pluck out the heart of more than Hamlet's mystery. This mining of the text has occasionally left the edifice near to collapse. Peter Thomson has commented on the selfishness of the actor in this regard:

> "One tendency of those modern actors who strive most earnestly for meaning has been to draw too much of the character's life into themselves, away from the audience."[3]

There would certainly appear to be grounds for complaint. David Warner spoke of his experience of playing the Prince and concluded, "I don't

know whether I learnt a great deal about Hamlet. But I learnt an awful lot about myself".[4] Peter Hall answered the case against the director, by implication, when he said: "There is no cow larger or more sacred than Hamlet."[5] Faced with the play, a director must interpret it afresh, unless his aim be to produce in the style of a particular historical period; the theatre does not stand still. At the same time, Hall shows himself to be aware that audiences hold more preconceived notions about Hamlet than about almost any other Shakespeare play - an impression borne out by any representative collection of first-night notices. Nonetheless, Hall is still prepared to advocate experiencing the play in the theatre:

> "The collective intelligence and perception of a theatre audience makes it possible for them to gain deeper understanding of the play in performance than any individual can get from the study of the text."[6]

It is from this standpoint that the six main-house productions of Hamlet at Stratford-upon-Avon will be examined. Each account will attempt to determine the ways in which the respective directors, actors and designers have mounted a production, having regard to changing theatrical styles and contemporary attitudes. The theatre company at Stratford is used as a touchstone for these changes. The accounts are based on the versions of the text used by each director (an appendix of cuts and textual variations for each production is included), and each has been compiled from prompt books, production records and press and other criticism. The aim is to determine the intentions of a production and to assess reaction to it; to this end each chapter reconstructs the progress of the play. At the centre of the work is Peter Hall's 1965 production, which generated a great deal of reaction at the time and which in turn was the inspiration of this thesis. It forms the longest chapter, incorporating three phases of production: at Stratford in 1965,

at The Aldwych Theatre, London, in the winter of 1965-66 and on its return to Stratford in the Spring of 1966.

L.C. Knights during the course of an interview in 1965 asked, "What production is ever going to give us all of Hamlet?"[7] The accounts which follow seek to evaluate six directors' attempts to answer that question.

Hamlet

1948

Director: Michael Benthall

Hamlet: Paul Scofield
Robert Helpmann

CHAPTER 1

"Mutton-Chop Hamlet"[1]

A sense of incredulity and mild outrage greeted Michael Benthall's idea of setting his production of Hamlet in the Victorian period. He had further raised public interest by announcing that two actors would alternate in the central role. The prospect of the young Paul Scofield measuring himself against an established star, Robert Helpmann, was to be relished, but the first-night notices were loud in their condemnation of Benthall's choice of setting:

> "Wantonly to produce the greatest tragedy of England's greatest playwright in almost the worst costume period of our history is most reprehensible in a theatre which properly regards itself as a national shrine"[2]

This reaction, taken from a provincial newspaper, serves to illustrate the wider problem which faced Sir Barry Jackson in presenting plays at The Shakespeare Memorial Theatre. More than a decade was to pass before Peter Hall would succeed in changing the name of the theatre and with it the last vestiges of an attitude which regarded Shakespeare's plays as inviolable.

Benthall had prepared the ground carefully, and his remarks indicate the amount of work which still remained to be done in educating the public:

> "In Elizabethan costume much of Hamlet's essential realism can, I feel, be lost. At Stratford I sincerely aimed at a mid-nineteenth century setting, brought to everyone's mind by memories of our grandparents.
>
> The play is staged in Gothic scenery with all the elegant, colourful crinolines and uniforms associated with the atmosphere of the mid-European court. In this way I hope to have retained the magic of the theatre without destroying the play's vital contemporary relevance"[3]

PLATE I

James Bailey's Setting for the 1948 Production

Benthall's insistence on the play's ability to speak to a contemporary audience is significant. He rejects a modern dress production on the ground of incongruities which attract too much attention. His solution will, he hopes, "startle the imagination into a new freshness".[4] J.C. Trewin assessed the realisation of these ideas:

> "Hamlet lived in James Bailey's romanticised Victorian Gothic Elsinore, a Winterhalter - Waterhouse Doubting Castle of fretted arcades. It would leave memories of candles and starlight, mutton-chop whiskers for the King, a floating blue crinoline for Ophelia, Polonius like a sub-standard Disraeli ... and troops in the helmets and scarlet tunics of heavy dragoons"[5]

The Production Records show a heavily pillared set with Gothic arches, steps leading to a raised section stage left and a recess stage right, with a permanent seat circling the right centre pillar. In the interior scenes, a collection of towered buildings, glimpsed through high Gothic windows, are outlined against the cyclorama. The scenes within the castle are well served by the spacious set and 'The Murder of Gonzago' is comfortably staged on the raised section. The pillars lend atmosphere and are frequently used for concealment. The set is cumbersome, however, when representing exterior scenes. Intrusive pillars remain for the encounter with Fortinbras, and the ropes of leaves which attempt to soften their starkness for the burial of Ophelia are a fussy and unsuccessful addition.

The Wardrobe Plot (see appendix D) indicates Military Tail Coats, epaulettes and orders for Claudius and the soldiery, with frock-coats, trousers, stocks and capes for the rest of the male characters, including Hamlet. Notable in Ophelia's wardrobe is a crinoline with petticoat, and in Gertrude's opulent silk and velvet dresses trimmed with jet, fur, lace and black net, together with a variety of heavy jewelry.

It is interesting to speculate whether Michael Benthall's conception owed something to a war-time production of Hamlet by Maurice Evans, designed to play to American overseas camps and which came to be known as 'The G.I. Hamlet'. This two and three quarter hour version costumed the male characters in military uniforms, and the photographic plates in the acting edition show many similarities to the 1948 Stratford production, especially in the case of Claudius, where the epaulettes, sash and decorations produce a strikingly similar effect.[6]

Benthall's production, which was the Birthday Play, opened on the 23 April with Paul Scofield playing Hamlet, followed on the 24 April by Robert Helpmann in the role. The performance lasted for 2 hours and 55 minutes with two intervals, the first coming after Act II Scene 2, and the second after Act IV Scene 4. (see appendix E). The text used was The Temple Edition where, from a total of 3,830 lines, 872 were cut, leaving a playing version of 2,958.

Perhaps the most significant cut is the removal of the Dumb Show in Act III Scene 2, though hardly less significant is the transposition of Act IV Scene 7 lines 58-161, in which Claudius plots Hamlet's death with Laertes, to follow Act V Scene 1 line 290, the burial of Ophelia and Hamlet's fight with Laertes. In so doing, the director appears to have given a changed emphasis to events and motivations. Claudius's political acumen in turning Laertes' potential rebellion into complicity in a plot to kill Hamlet has been sacrificed. In its place we see the shrewdness which recognises a young man ripe for action against the Prince and who capitalises on that moment. Shakespeare undoubtedly shows Claudius working against greater odds to persuade Laertes, and the transposition has the benefit of laying the plot

before the audience just prior to its execution. This, together with some heavy cutting at the beginning of Act V Scene 2, has the effect of concentrating the climax of the tragedy.

The cut in Act I Scene 1, lines 70-107, removes the background elaboration of the wars with Norway and this sets a pattern throughout the play, though Act IV Scene 4, which sees Hamlet's encounter with young Fortinbras, is played in its entirety. Voltimand and Cornelius are cut. Thus Claudius sends dispatches to Norway by Osric and a deft substitution of "This" for "And" in Act 1 Scene 2 line 33 neatly turns the meaning of the line to refer to the letter ("This we here dispatch").

Polonius's encounter with Reynaldo is cut from Act II Scene 1. This is perhaps consistent with a Polonius who seems to show an affection for his children; Ophelia is often calmed with a caress at stressful moments. In this same vein the cutting of Act IV Scene 5 lines 95-111 and lines 113-115a removes the reference to Laertes's rebellion and makes his quarrel with the king a personal one motivated by the death of his father. The element of personal suffering is further reinforced by the cuts and transposition in Act IV Scene 7 which bring the report of Ophelia's death to follow more quickly on Laertes's seeing her mad.

It is interesting to note that the prompt book indicates a cut in Act III Scene 1 lines 43-4 of the words: "Gracious so please you we will bestow ourselves", which was subsequently reinstated. In the Nunnery scene which follows, Hamlet is asked to react to Claudius's and Polonius's shadows to give point to line 130: "Where's your father?".

The cutting of Act IV Scene 3 lines 21-30 regrettably removes Hamlet's illustration of how a king may go a progress through the

guts of a beggar - an important piece of calculated insolence on Hamlet's part as his confrontations with Claudius grow more hostile.

There are some minor cuts which presumably remove evidence which conflicts with the production: for example, Act I Scene 2 line 230 "he wore his beaver up" and Act II Scene 2 line 576 "Plucks off my beard and blows it in my face".

The Temple Edition of the text consistently uses "it" or "he" where the New Cambridge Edition favours "a'" in both cases: Act I Scene 1 line 43 and Act I Scene 2 line 186-7 respectively provide examples of this. Similarly the New Cambridge Editions uses "somever", "howsomever" and "whatsomever" where the Temple Edition omits the "m". In Act I Scene 2 line 67 the Temple Edition's reading of "sun" is used as opposed to the New Cambridge Edition's "son", thereby following the more straightforward imagery of light and darkness rather than the subtler implications of word play suggested by the second reading. A similar decision is taken with the first line of Hamlet's first soliloquy where "solid" is preferred to "sullied".

At the opening of the play, the atmospheric quality of the set is quickly put to use. Music and a single bell tolling bring up the curtain and a brazier placed down right centre helps to establish the cold watches of the night. Horatio's first line is spoken off-stage, a cause of regret to one critic who felt that "Friends to this ground" holds the key to much that follows.[7] The pillars are soon in use as Horatio cowers behind them as the Ghost appears, and its silhouette against the cyclorama is used to enhance its subsequent appearance. On the last line of the scene Barnardo picks up a book from near the brazier. Hamlet's studious habits are thus neatly established and Gertrude's line "But look where sadly the poor wretch

comes reading (Act II Scene 2 l.168) will come as no surprise.

In the first court scene, mullioned windows are added to the set and a desk and two chairs are brought in. The desk will form a focal point in several scenes to follow, giving opportunity for Claudius to suggest, as in this scene, a business-like approach to the matters in hand. Osric is identified at this early stage in the prompt book and brought in to sort the king's papers. Councillors, Polonius and Laertes assemble, and Claudius, preceded by Gertrude. Finally, Hamlet enters inconspicuously, moves along the rear of the stage and by way of the pillars finds his way downstage. The prompt book seems to suggest a change of mind on the part of the director in lighting this scene. The opening section of business is bracketed and the words "Now done in B.O." added by the Stage Manager. One must assume that the characters now arrive in a black-out and the lights go up on a stage picture already complete.

During the course of the King's first speech Hamlet is made to react to "taken to wife" by dropping onto the pillar seat, which produces a murmur from the court. When Claudius finally addresses him it is with support of the Queen who arrives to put a hand on Claudius's arm. It is a concerted act of persuasion intended to demonstrate the unity of the new marriage.

The court's exit, accompanied by music, finds Hamlet leaning on the desk, facing upstage. He turns to begin the first soliloquy, the majority of which is then delivered from the pillar seat. Paul Scofield's rendering of the soliloquy showed a man paralysed by grief and revulsion.

Laertes's farewell provides further opportunity for the Victorian setting to assert itself, requiring four footmen to bring on trunk and topcoat. The scene establishes the impression of family affection,

each solicitous for the other's welfare. Ophelia is made to foreshadow her encounter with Hamlet in the Nunnery Scene by touching a necklace when speaking of the "tenders of his affection to me".

A return to the battlements finds Hamlet nervously awaiting the appearance of the Ghost, casting sharp glances about him. As the Ghost enters, the cloak falls from Hamlet's shoulders; his eyes are shielded and his companions crouch on the ground. He deliberately crosses himself and with perfect steadiness murmurs:

"Angels and ministers of grace defend us".

As Hamlet follows the Ghost to "a more removed ground", looped chains with simulated cobwebs hanging from them are flown in. Hamlet enters holding his sword hilt extended in the sign of the cross as if already mindful that

"The spirit that I have seen
May be a devil"

(Act II Scene 2 l.602-603).

He plays most of the scene kneeling on the ground, hands reaching out towards the Ghost. On learning of the murder, he leans back with a hand stretched upwards. There is much use made of Hamlet's echoing odd words and cries from the Ghost: "murder" line 26; "his crown" line 40; a cry on line 73; "horrible" line 80; "remember me" line 92, as if to prepare for the Ghost's later echoing of "swear". The Ghost passes his hand over Hamlet's head in a cleansing movement on the line "Taint not thy mind".

Left alone, Hamlet falls as if in a faint. This prompted the critic of The Leamington Spa Courier to fear for Helpmann's safety:

> "Helpmann's body crumpled and twisted and then fairly thwacked on the stage. His head went so far over the first step that it flopped down and brushed the second step with his hair. He did it with such violence that a gasping audience thought he had broken his neck."
>
> (30 April 1948)

Scofield appears to have been a little more restrained. The prompt book suggests further differences in the way the two actors handled this moment. Music covered the Ghost's exit and Helpmann asked for this to build to a crescendo and be cut "dead off" as a springboard to the soliloquy. It is tempting to see this as a dancer's reliance on the impetus of music. Scofield asked for a fade before he moved into the speech. Scofield's treatment of the soliloquies generally was seen as an expression of mental questing more than emotional anguish. T.C. Kemp, critic of The Birmingham Post, observes:

> "All the soliloquies are delivered quietly as if Hamlet were besetwith thoughts to which he scarce dare give voice."
>
> (26 April 1948)

A piece of business common to both actors entailed finding the abandoned sword and using it to point the line "smiling damned villain". It was also used on the final line of the soliloquy: "I have sworn't" to fix a decision which presages the cellerage scene.

The Act ends with an underlining of the responsibility which weighs on Hamlet. At the beginning of his final speech he collapses and is caught by Horatio. He plays out the remainder of the scene supported by Horatio and Marcellus.

Reynaldo's scene is cut and Ophelia's entrance opens Act II. This is given greater immediacy by having her cast frequent glances off-stage as though she expects Hamlet's dissheveled figure to pursue her. Polonius calms her and sits her on a chair, putting his arm about her. She collapses again as Polonius suggests in line 107 that Hamlet is mad. As he shepherds her off to see the King they cross Osric on the way. The suggestion of eavesdropping, which Claudius and Polonius will indulge in later, is thus made and the ground prepared for the arrival of the King's spies.

Claudius warmly shakes the hands of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. As with Laertes's departure, Benthall uses their arrival to bring on footmen to relieve them of hats and coats. As the court assembles, a page, with a box of playing cards, follows the ladies on. Benthall plays up the fawning attitudes of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern by giving them extra words to punctuate the King's first four lines. Polonius is significantly added to this scene. The mood is cheerful, with Claudius clapping Guildenstern on the shoulder as the Queen identifies them as close friends of Hamlet, and footmen bring in drinks. Rosencrantz, Guildenstern and Claudius take them, the Queen refuses. A near comic touch is added as Polonius, who obviously has not been offered a drink, takes a glass as the footman passes. The mood continues through to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's departure.

The cutting of the ambassadors' return brings forward Polonius with his revelations. The King and Queen exchange knowing glances as he promises to be brief. When the import of what Polonius has to say becomes apparent, the Queen dismisses the gossiping ladies - the mood of frivolity has gone. The scene is now characterised by people drawing in around the King at his desk, a closing down of the earlier expansive mood as the serious plotting gets underway.

Hamlet is brought in to overhear the plot at the beginning of line 160, one line later than Dover Wilson suggests in The New Cambridge Edition, and is made to leave after "Mark the encounter", line 164, perhaps making the point a little melodramatically. Then on the Queen's line "But look where sadly the poor wretch comes reading", Claudius and Gertrude go up right to look off-stage, thereby establishing that they have no knowledge of his having overheard.

Osric's presence in this scene is thrown into relief. He has not

been dismissed with the rest of the court, and Polonius is made to address his line "O give me leave" (line 170) to him. The suggestion is that he is gleaning information - a man on the way up in the court who may someday find what he hears useful. Though he is "spacious in the possession of dirt" (Act V Scene 2 1.89) he does not have a corresponding influence.

The Players are introduced with off-stage noise and music, and a sense of anticipation is built up as a page scurries in, followed by footmen with the inevitable luggage. Hamlet sees Polonius escorting in the players and his appearance is used to give rise to "I know a hawk from a handsaw" (1.383). The sight of Polonius is sufficient to recall their riddling exchange shortly before. The players arrive and dispose themselves about the stage on trunks and hat boxes. The First Player stands on a props basket in front of the pillar to deliver his speech, and the footmen are joined by ladies of the court to swell the audience. Polonius's interjection "This is too long" deflates him and he gets down, only to be reinstated by Hamlet as he in turn deflates Polonius. Candles are sent for and, addressing himself to the actor who will play Lucianus to request the insertion of "some dozen or sixteen lines", Hamlet finally dismisses them, to the accompaniment of further music.

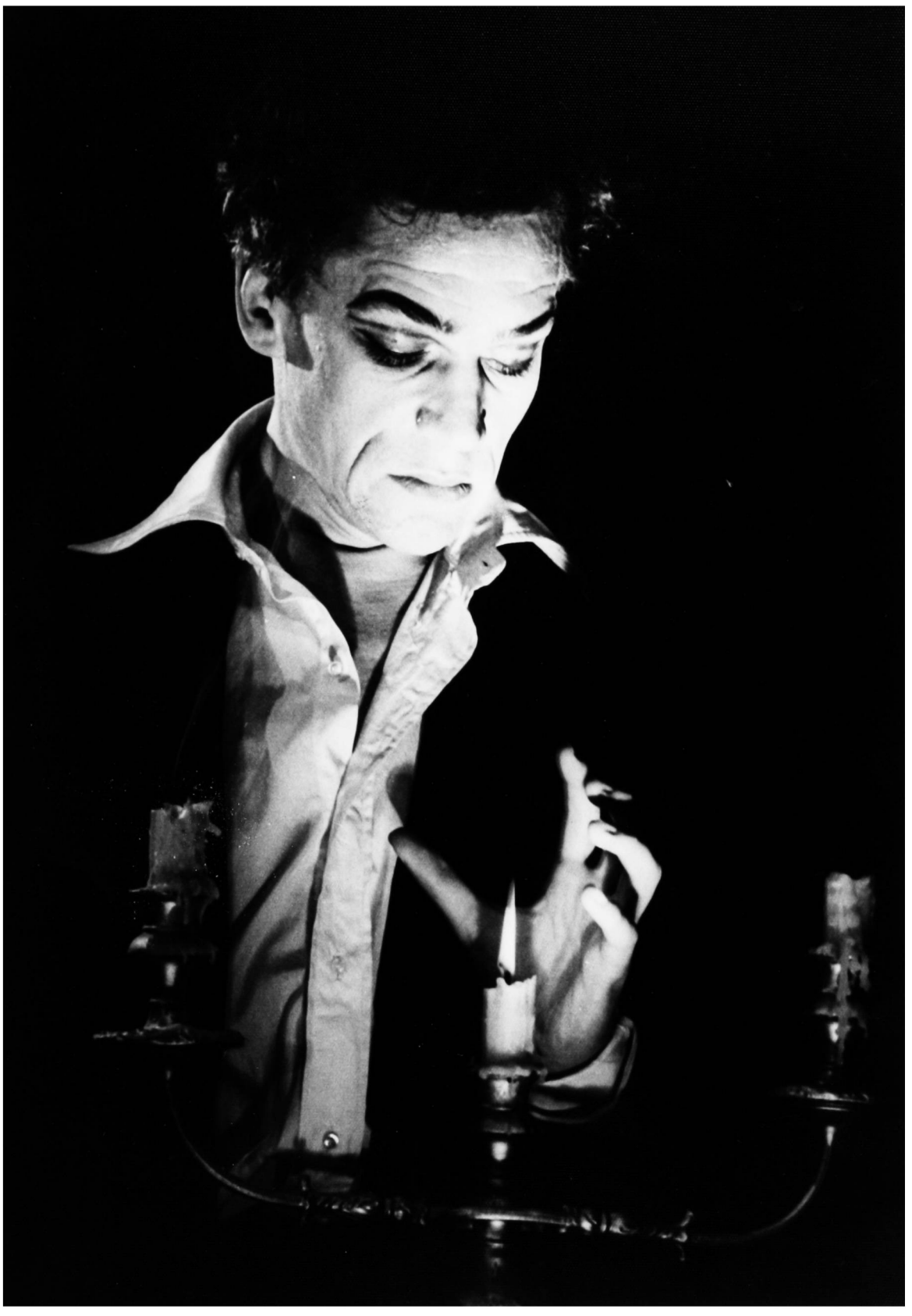
Hamlet begins his soliloquy on the pillar seat, crossing to the desk during the build-up "Bloody, bawdy villain!" and finding release by hurling a dagger on the line "O Vengeance!". This is a piece of business in the tradition of successive Hamlets, who have variously driven a dagger into a table, broken the Player's wooden sword, beaten on the seat of the throne and even kicked it from the dais.[8] The speech continues with Hamlet pacing around, unwinding from this crescendo. As he persuades himself to apply his brain to the problem

PLATE II

The spirit that I have seen
May be the devil".

Helpmann as Hamlet, Act II Scene 2

PLATE III



"I'll have grounds
More relative than this."

Scofield as Hamlet, Act II Scene 2

he comes to the desk as if seeking a place to arrive at a decision. The prompt-book indicates that he completes the soliloquy extinguishing a candelabra,flame by flame,as he formulates his decisions. A first set of cues gives five numbered points in the speech: to follow lines 600a; 600b; 601a; 608a; 609. These then appear to have been superseded by bolder lettering A.B.C., reducing the cues to three: to follow lines 602a; 608a; 609. It is possible that the business, having been tried with a five-branched candelabra was found to be excessive and that a three-branched candelabra was substituted, the cues being reinstated at more decisive moments. Photographs and the Properties Plot in the Production records do not support different business for Scofield and Helpmann. It is of interest to compare business recorded by Gordon Crosse in his playgoing diaries relating to this same soliloquy when Helpmann played Hamlet at The Old Vic in 1944.[9] He refers to Helpmann's tapping on a drum left by the players, which builds to a crescendo during the final lines. It is interesting to speculate whether the actor,having found such business helpful previously, initiated the idea of extinguishing the candles.

After a brief pause, a slow curtain brings the first part of the play to an end.

A cymbal clash and a fast curtain open Act III. A chandelier has been flown in,and Osric is added to the characters in the short scene preceding Hamlet's entrance. "To be or not to be" is delivered mainly from a stool placed left. The lengthy pause following line 80 suggests a long deliberation before Hamlet withdraws from the brink of contemplated suicide. The critic of The Times writes of Scofield's

> "... spiritual fugitive who seeks not so desperately the fulfilment of his earthly mission as some steadfast refuge for the hard-driven imagination, and only in death the refuge is found"
>
> (26 April 1948)

Ophelia enters reading a book, which prompts Hamlet to put his own book into his pocket. A long pause before she greets him suggests that she is apprehensive of a repetition of their previous meeting. Hamlet's response, "I humbly thank you, well, well, well" is cue for his departure; he is not seeking a confrontation. Ophelia's offer to return his remembrances restrains him. The pause before he replies, one of many throughout the scene, suggests that he is slow to anger. There is a deliberateness about Hamlet as he closes Ophelia's book and takes her wrist before asking "are you honest?", a hold he keeps until "I did love you once". A long pause is held before he delivers the first "Get thee to a nunnery". The critic of The Leamington Spa Courier commends Scofield for investing this moment with "a tenderness which was infinitely moving and which served to increase the passionate bitterness of the repetition". (30 April 1948). The prompt book records different business for Scofield and Helpmann at this point. Scofield follows Ophelia to stand up left of her where he later strokes her hair, Helpmann sits to her left, rising later to put his hand on her shoulder.

In a production with much candle-light it is appropriate that Hamlet should see the shadows of Claudius and Polonius to prompt his question "Where's your father?", even though it makes the point a little melodramatically. Ophelia bows her head, revealing her complicity in the plot. "O help him you sweet heavens" becomes a general cry for help as she directs the line off-stage and moves quickly about like a trapped animal. She covers first her face then her ears and finally cringes from him. By having Hamlet direct the line "It hath made me mad" towards the arras in addition to the more usual "I say we will have no more marriages", Benthall is underlining an earlier point: Claudius has already reacted strongly to Guildenstern's report on Hamlet,

"But with a crafty madness keeps aloof
When we would bring him on to some confession
Of his true State"

(Act III Scene 1 lines 8-10)

This strikes home to Ophelia too as she turns her back on him. The line "all but one shall live" is also directed to Claudius as Hamlet makes a speedy exit, delivering the final "To a nunnery go" off-stage.

Act III Scene 2 opens with a bustle of activity from the players who are preparing their performance. A fringed cloth is being laid along the platform left Centre to convert it to a stage. There is much coming and going of footmen with stools and candelabra. The Player King and Lucianus are striding about muttering their lines. The Prologue throws a cloak over the screen and The Player Queen is coping with the "Ingenue's" split dress, which she mends throughout the scene. A clown runs in to hold a mirror for the now kneeling Player King to make up, producing a general laugh as he rises in embarrassment at hearing Hamlet's voice. Hamlet himself is seated amongst them, establishing a sense of belonging. The mood is relaxed and contrasts with the tensions to come. The suggestion is that the company is going about its business unaware of the effect it will create; for them it is another performance.

The court assembles with the King and Queen making their way to the thrones down right, Polonius positioning himself behind them. Hamlet moves down left to the seated Ophelia, where they both face in towards the Players' stage. With the cutting of The Dumb Show, the problem of Claudius's reaction is circumvented and line 140,

"The players cannot keep counsel, they'll tell all.",

is made to refer to what the Prologue is preparing to say. The stage is darkened by footmen extinguishing and removing candles. The first scene of the play is greeted by applause and the court quickly lapses

into conversation. As Lucianus holds the poison above his head, Hamlet crawls across to Claudius, leaning towards him to enforce the line "He poisons him i' th' garden". Claudius rises and crosses to the Player King. His action is greeted first with a buzz of conversation then with a silence as the crowd draws back to make way for his exit. As Claudius cries "Give me some light", he turns and sees Hamlet who backs slowly downstage. He then turns quickly and cries "Away". There is a general exit and a small page is carried out, having fainted at the horror of the play. Ophelia is left, bewildered, and Polonius eventually shepherds her off. Lucianus and the Player King run out, fearful of what they have done. The Prologue and the Clown return to clear a stool, and a page, who has moved towards Guildenstern as he approaches Hamlet receives a clout and is picked up and taken off by the players. Hamlet seems deflated by his success.

Claudius approaches his prayer soliloquy with a candelabra, for which he has exchanged his empty wine glass. He places it on a chair, his sword on the ground. He kneels at the opening of the speech but is soon restlessly pacing about, his head in his hands, throwing glances up to heaven or striking his chest. He returns to kneel on "Bow stubborn knees". The critic of The Birmingham Mail observed that Claudius "knelt to pray in a mood of mawkish insobriety ... muddled in thought, fuddled in speech" (24 April 1948). Hamlet first sees the light of the candelabra before discovering Claudius. He eventually departs with Claudius's sword, following the business introduced by Sir John Gielgud at the New Theatre in 1934.[10]

The set change for the closet scene involves fringed swags being flown in, which provide an arras for Polonius, a screen whose design reflects the windows, a large, draped pouffe with cushions and a

dressing table complete with mirror and crucifix. Candelabra illuminate the scene and the Queen is discovered brushing her hair. Lockets are used for portraits of the Kings. The scene is emotional, with the Queen sobbing into her hands and Hamlet pulling them away the better to direct his attack. At the Ghost's entrance, Hamlet crosses himself and extends a hand as if in a desire to re-unite the family. He drops to his knees on the line

"Do you not come your tardy son to chide"

to be joined by his mother. After the Ghost's departure the Queen goes to the spot where he has last been seen and looks off-stage in an attempt to see him herself.

There follows a period of quiet where Hamlet leans against his mother, who is seated on the pouffe. Their arms encircle each other protectively, with the Queen making calming gestures. The prompt book indicates that Helpmann rose to stand over his mother in a position of dominance to urge her not to enter his uncle's bed again, while Scofield played the same passage from a seated position. Kenneth Tynan commended Scofield for "this strange technique of not insisting". He recognises his ability to suggest rather than underline:

> "He never aims his whole being at any one bull's eye of emotion. That is too easy: the art is in missing by inches, and thus creating for us a human being incidentally expressing anger, instead of an embodiment of anger who is only incidentally a human being. The lines serve to illuminate a man not a passion."[11]

This scene was generally well received, some critics seeing it as the climax of the play.

As Gertrude explains Polonius's death to her husband, he picks up the sword which Hamlet has used to kill him; ironically it is his own. He attempts to comfort his wife, but she, when bidden "O, come away!" rises, looks at him and turns to exit alone. She is still

consumed by the emotions generated in the encounter with her son. This gives extra depth to Claudius's final line:

"My soul is full of discord and dismay".

Barnardo, Francisco and Marcellus are added to the pursuers of Hamlet. The tenebrous lighting picking up the gleam of a helmet, the glint of a sword between the pillars, together with Hamlet's hysterical jesting - all serve to heighten the sense of excitement. Hamlet is brought before a full court, with Osric offering for the King's signature a letter which we can presume to be the missive for England. Osric's insinuation into the plot proceeds a step further. The movement in the scene brings the King and court bearing down upon Hamlet at the mention of England and on line 55 the King's "Away!" clears the court, leaving the lines

"for everything is sealed and done
That else leans on th' affair - "

for Rosencrantz's and Guildenstern's ears alone.

The set is stripped down to the bare cyclorama to give a sense of open spaces for the encounter with Fortinbras, though the now incongruous pillars must be ignored. Two soldiers and the Norwegian Royal Standard represent the army and three footmen are added to the Danish party. The reluctance of his bodyguard to leave when Hamlet bids them "go a little before" suggests that they are suspicious of an escape. The exchange between Fortinbras and Hamlet is played with Fortinbras consulting a map. A rustle of maps is also inserted to give point to the line "Examples gross as earth exhort me" during Hamlet's soliloquy.

The interior setting is restored for Ophelia's mad scene and two gentlewomen are substituted for the gentlemen referred to in the Temple and New Cambridge editions of the text. Horatio is not present. Ophelia defines an imaginary grave, where she falls to her knees weeping at

the end of the song. There is a suggested confusion of Claudius with her father as she follows him about the stage and occasionally puts her arms about his neck. He signals to the ladies to cut off her retreat, recalling the earlier pursuit of Hamlet, and she, having collapsed on the floor, turns an accusing look on him with "My brother shall know of it". As she goes, she curtseys to the ladies, who bow their heads. They have been embarrassed by her obscenities.

Laertes enters flanked by Barnardo and Francisco (additions to the text); he is already being policed. Laertes does, however, break out as soon as he enters, grabbing a sword from his guards and menacing Claudius. Barnardo and Francisco are quick to regain control. A footman moves into position behind him and the Queen lays a restraining hand on his sword arm. Barnardo and Francisco are dismissed but Laertes struggles intermittently, and there is a continuing threat of violence, causing the Queen to interpose herself between him and the King. He advances his sword until the King moves it gently away with

"Why now you speak
Like a good child and a true gentleman."

Ophelia's reappearance finds her subject to the same controls as her brother, she is surrounded by Barnardo, Francisco, two footmen and three ladies. She crosses to Laertes, but there is no sign of recognition. It is interesting to note an instruction deleted from the prompt book on line 158: "Ophelia runs into his arms and kisses him". This has subsequently been reduced to a "giggle" from Ophelia. The director appears to have decided that the original embrace could be misconstrued as recognition and not in keeping with her state of mind. Later she confuses Laertes with Hamlet as she backs from him on the line

"It is the false steward that stole his master's daughter"

A continuous touching of her necklace harks back to the jewels she returned in the Nunnery Scene. She goes to the King and the Queen, inclining her head and stroking their shoulders, underlining her need for comfort and that it is the loss of a loved one which has unhinged her. At her departure, Claudius moves in on Laertes, taking him by the arm. He must be seen to be his support. The critics spoke of frightening realism and rising poignancy in this scene, though one did ask for more poetry and less lunacy

The effect of the transposition (lines 58-161) causes the King's urgent opening to be cut short in the scene which follows (Act IV Scene 7). The irony which stems from the news of Ophelia's death following hard upon her brother's plotting to kill Hamlet is lost.

Act V opens with the stage transformed by long vertical strings of leaves, suspended from the flies. Shadowy turrets are still visible in the background and the grave is constructed by inserting a section of low stone-block wall to join the right centre pillars to the circular steps left centre. Much play is made with the grave in the early drowning jokes, the First Clown jumping in to illustrate drowning by water. The exchanges are characterised by buffoonery and slapstick, the Second Clown being encouraged to cudgel his brains with the help of a blow from a shovel.

Hamlet's entrance is noted by the critic of The Birmingham Evening Despatch to have been "jaunty and suave, as though nothing had happened". (26 April 1948)

The arrival of the funeral party is signalled by a church bell, which tolls at five second intervals until the general exit and then at twenty second intervals to the end of the scene. The coffin is

carried shoulder high by four footmen. Laertes's leap into the grave produces a murmur from the crowd, which increases as Hamlet reveals himself. Several move in to part them and Hamlet is led away by Horatio. The Queen moves to him on "O my son what theme?", recalling momentarily their relationship in the closet scene. She recognises in him the same emotions, the same needs. The party leaves, save for Claudius and Laertes who remain to plot the death of Hamlet.

The cutting of Hamlet's account of the sea-fight has the effect of moving the action swiftly to its climax. Osric's entrance finds Hamlet seated and Horatio leaning against a pillar. The essential humour is extracted from this scene, with the overly casual prince ribbing the pompous underling. The patterns of movement have Hamlet circling Osric, keeping him off balance, not sure where the next attack is coming from. Osric finally has his balloon pricked by tripping on a step as he dutifully backs out. Hamlet and Horatio laugh - the rout is complete.

For the final scene a table, with drinks, is brought in by footmen and set by the pillar right. The court enters, and Claudius, Hamlet and Laertes take up a central position. Osric hovers behind them, while the Queen watches from the platform up left. Hamlet's coat is given to Horatio and Laertes's to a footman, who also holds spare foils. Osric takes the foils to Hamlet and Laertes, and the spare ones to the table, returning with the unbaited foil. The mood at this stage is relaxed, with laughter from the ladies and general cheering as the duel gets under way; drinks are handed round. With the cry of "Have at you now!" Laertes stabs Hamlet in the back and a shout of "Foul" is heard from Barnardo amongst the general crowd noise. This is followed by a silence, then a gasp as Laertes loses his sword. The Queen moves quickly to the King's side. A page

crouches fearfully by the bottom step holding the cup. As the fight continues now in earnest, the combatants move onto the rostrum and the court retreats to the safety of the arch down right, the King supporting his dying Queen, where they watch in silence. Laertes jumps onto a seat rolls down the steps and is stabbed by Hamlet. The table is overturned. The Queen, supported by her ladies and attended by Hamlet, moves to the centre of the stage where she dies. The King, moving slowly onto the rostrum, is killed there by Hamlet and made to drink of the poisoned cup. Marcellus and Francisco rush to his aid and the crowd gathers at the foot of the steps. Hamlet takes Laertes's hand as he exchanges forgiveness with him and, following a struggle for the poisoned cup with Horatio, he falls dead down centre stage. Horatio kneels at his side.

Fortinbras's entrance is greeted by a silence, which one critic interpreted as panic on the part of the court, broken only by the sobbing of the frightened page. Hamlet is carried off by Barnado, Francisco and Marcellus to a measured drum-beat and cannon fire. The curtain slowly falls. Kenneth Tynan felt that the director had missed the opportunity to put the final seal on his production by up-dating the traditional cannon to a volley of muskets.

The production, which had suffered so much from adverse press reaction prior to its opening, undoubtedly justified itself in the eyes of the majority of critics and the public. Michael Benthall, under the guidance of Sir Barry Jackson, was breaking new ground. The Stratford theatre-going public needed to be shocked out of a sense of complacency, as the tone of some of the critical comment proved. The Victorian setting was seized on:

"I have seen Manchester town hall on a dark day look

> uncommonly like these chambers and battlements of Elsinore's court".[12]

and one critic pompously opined:

> "Such an experiment, even if justified is not the business of Stratford, where the public is entitled to a Danish court and not a Victorian drawing room."[13]

Hamlet was likened to Nicholas Nickleby, a public statue and a medical student of the Lister school; Polonius to Gladstone and Palmerstone; Claudius was seen as the admirable Albert and a bilious blimp, and the Ghost an effigy of Wellington. Some felt, however, that the costumes were helpful in clarifying court precedence and social nuance, and were able to identify the court's treatment of Hamlet with recognisable diplomatic pressure.

The double casting of the central role invited comparison of the two actors. By consensus, Scofield was the more passionate, imaginative and exciting, Helpmann the more cerebral, clear and rhythmic. In an interview with Ronald Hayman, Scofield is tentative about this first encounter with Hamlet, being concerned mainly with avoiding "the mechanical processes of taught interpretation".[14] His second attempt at the role produced a more positive reaction to the play as a Revenge Tragedy. Kenneth Tynan felt that for his generation he was C.S. Lewis's "pale man" and gives a detailed description of his technique:

> "Unconvinced and tentative, he pads about the wide solitary stage, his turned out feet going two ways in two minds, his tired hands flickering, his lips pursed and worried ... he will prowl around, inclined stiff-necked forwards ... Again the plaintive voice breaks, and the unsought squalor of being tightly involved in murder and adulteries bursts afresh on his intelligent soul".[15]

From the critics in general he elicited much praise and keen anticipation, though he was castigated for a tendency to rush the lines. His underplaying disturbed a good number of theatre-goers who were more inclined to the full theatrical performance, and Robert Speaight felt that it

was this which prevented him from making the part more definitively his own.[16]

Helpmann came to the part as an old hand, having danced the role with Sadlers' Wells many times and played it at The New Theatre with The Old Vic in 1944. This performance had met with a mixed reception, the opinion being that he was not sufficiently dominant. Similar reservations can be detected in The Times review in 1948:

> "Mr Helpmann himself is part of the melodramatic bustle. He seeks not his own death but the death of Claudius and, that achieved, is left a little lacking in tragic splendour. The part is spoken with a beautiful clearness and precision, but the passionate craving for spiritual certitude is somehow absent from it ... Hamlet's imaginative life remains somewhat remote."
>
> (26 April 1948)

He is commended for avoiding "balletic excess", praised, indeed, for his movement. His wit, diction and capacity for sudden detachment are noted with approval. His excitements are of the reason rather than of the blood.

Most critics contented themselves with weighing the differences between the two actors. Amongst those who expressed a preference, Scofield had the edge.

For the rest of the cast, Claudius had his detractors, but in general Anthony Quayle's performance was well liked. Much was made of his drunkenness, "a bluff, rubious intriguer, a six-bottle man",[17] and The Times's critic gave him the final accolade: "a genial Victorian man of the world with whom it would be a pleasure to dine". Diana Wynyard's Gertrude fared less well. She was felt to be withdrawn, with a statuesque beauty, decorative but struggling to achieve Gertrude's natural sensuality. Claire Bloom's Ophelia made no great impression except in the mad scenes where opinion was divided as to whether the intensity of her performance had overreached itself.

Esmond Knight's Ghost divided the critics still further: a noisy spectre, asthmatic but capable of chilling the blood. The critics have recourse to much political analogy in discussing John Kidd's Polonius, which gets qualified approval.

One critic at least, W.A. Darlington, saw further than the immediate impact of this production and recognised it as part of a changing pattern at Stratford:

> "I hope the Stratford authorities realise how deeply Sir Barry Jackson has put them in his debt by raising the standard of acting at The Memorial Theatre during his time as director. Two admirable Hamlets in the company at once - one homegrown, one imported. Can this be Stratford? One rubs ones eyes in amazement."[18]

Hamlet

1956

Director: Michael Langham

Hamlet: Alan Badel

CHAPTER 2

"Hamlet without the Prince"[1]

The indictment of Alan Badel's Hamlet was universal: his voice, his stature, his presence, his interpretation - all were the subject of scrutiny and subsequent disapproval. Although many critics were prepared to concede the worth of the actor, few were able to say that he had enhanced his reputation by this introspective, self-preoccupied performance. John Russell Brown summed up the feeling:

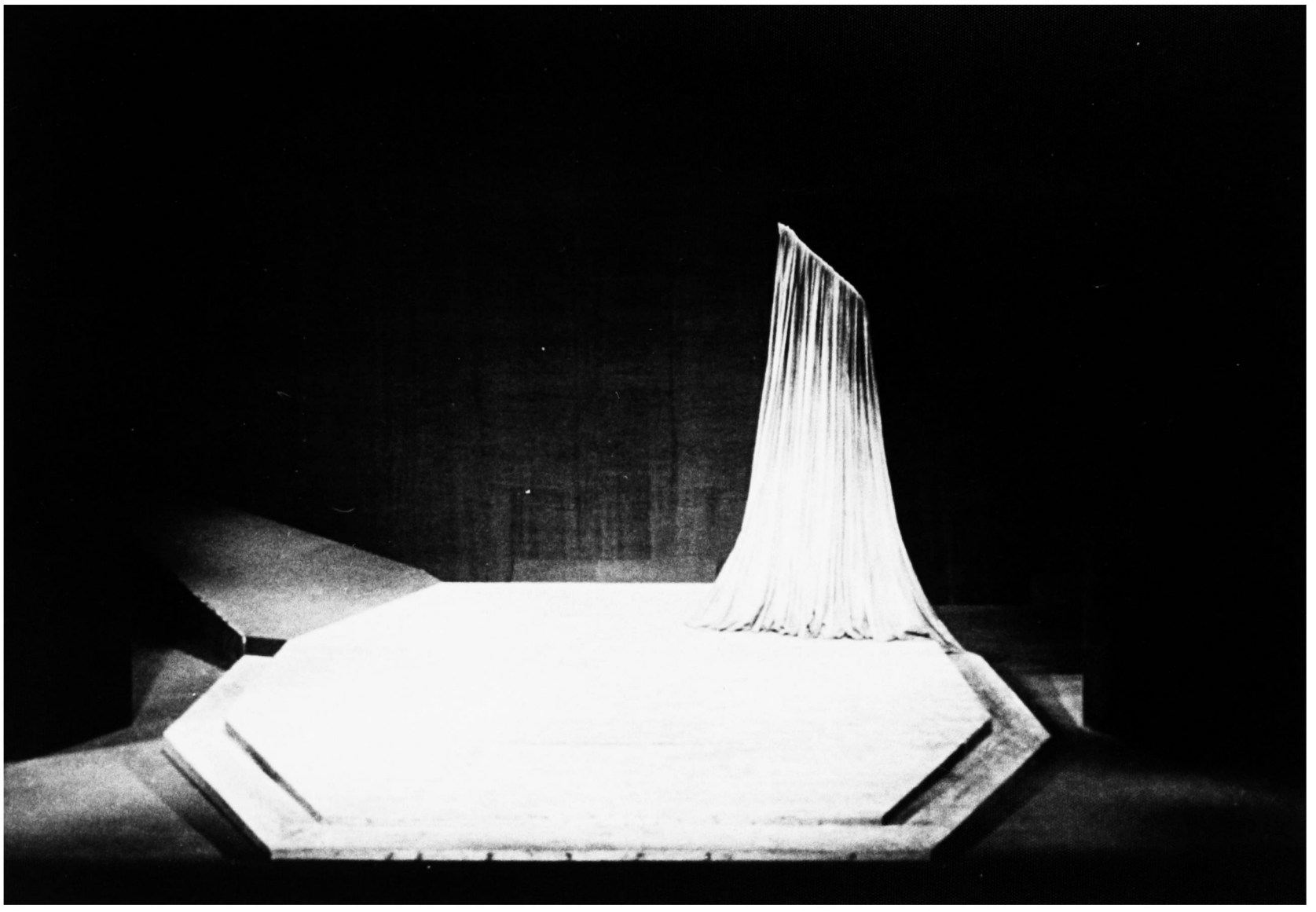
> "Hamlet was an unromantic prince, an egotistical neurotic, the sort of man for whom nothing ever goes right and who is always resenting it. He was passionately concerned only with himself and his own frustration."[2]

Such was the extent of the condemnation that the actor himself was consulted on his bad notices. He replied:

> "The performance will develop, but it won't be changed."[3]

Alan Badel and Michael Langham had worked in close co-operation on this production. Having met during the war, they joined forces again at Stratford-upon-Avon, where Langham, who had since become the director of Stratford, Ontario, invited Michael Northern to be responsible for both set design and lighting. He assembled a group of actors better known for their work outside Shakespeare. These included Diana Churchill, who was to play Gertrude and had made her reputation in revue and modern drama, Andrew Faulds, Laertes, who captured much of the early publicity through his fame as Radio's Jet Morgan, and Dilys Hamlett, who provoked much punning on her name ("Hamlett as Ophelia") and who was largely untried. The intention appears to have been a fresh look at the play, with a team uncluttered by preconceived ideas. Nowhere was this more apparent than in the design of the set.

PLATE IV



The "octagonal breadboard."

Setting for the 1956 production by Michael Northern

Michael Northern built up the stage level ten inches and placed at the centre an octagonal shape. This stood six inches above a surrounding step which itself rose three inches from the built-up stage level. A projecting rostrum at the back was on the same level as the octagon. This was reached by steps at the two sides leading up from sunken areas, referred to in the prompt book as "the lift steps". Further access to the stage was provided by a ramp up right, openings behind the proscenium arch and up left, together with steps leading from the orchestra pit. There was no front curtain. Black drapes surrounded the stage area, throwing into relief a blue curtain (referred to in the prompt book as "the banner"), which was supported by a twelve foot high frame at the up left corner of the octagon. The grave trap was down centre. The prompt book numbers the sides of the octagon 1 to 8 and subdivides its area, lettering A to O. The rest of the playing area is referred to as "the surround". (See Sketch and Stage Plot, Appendix F).

It was suggested that the designer was attempting to reproduce the effect of the open stage at Stratford, Ontario. Stratford-upon-Avon did not take kindly to the idea, the acting area being variously referred to as an octagonal bread board, a tree stump and, with its vertically projecting curtain, a cavity in some dreadfully decayed tooth. More seriously, it was seen as an attempt to give prominence to the hero against actors at a lower level. It undoubtedly exerted a great influence on the patterns of movement, with characters circling and weaving about its central point. The starkness of the stage picture inevitably threw emphasis onto the costumes, but the designs did not emerge with great credit. They were of no particular period - The Middle Ages, The Renaissance and the twentieth century were all referred to by the critics in a confused attempt to pinpoint

the designer's intentions. One critic even felt that Desmond Healey had been trying to produce costumes which were authentically Danish. The critic of The Financial Times may have isolated the problem:

> "The simple shapes and colours look well against the black background, the narrow trousers of the men seem somewhat incongruous."
>
> (11 April 1956)

This incongruity was the source of much bemused speculation by the press who compared the appearance of the actors to skiers, bell-hops and spacemen. Hamlet's costume was subsequently adapted.

It is possible that the costumes suffered under the lighting, devised by Michael Northern in conjunction with his set. The lighting attempted to provide a mood for the action which the audience was perhaps more used to drawing from a realistic set. The technique is recognisably cinematic. Thus in The Closet Scene, light fades from the body of Polonius, focusing attention on Hamlet and Gertrude; Hamlet pursued by the court after hiding Polonius's body, is discovered on a darkened stage in a pool of light. Rosemary Anne Sisson compared the lighting to "the varying instruments of a symphony orchestra, to change the mood and the emphasis, to give a sense of space or crowding, or warmth or cold".[4]

The production opened the 1956 season on 10 April, and ran for sixty three performances. Average playing time was two hours and fifty minutes, with one interval following Act III Scene 1. The text used was The New Temple Edition from which a total of 728 lines were cut, leaving a playing version of 3,102 lines, which the prompt book breaks down into seventeen scenes, ignoring act and scene divisions. The New Temple edition has a tendency throughout to drop the unaccented 'e' at the end of a word, replacing it with an apostrophe. Specific

instances of this feature have not, therefore, been noted in the tables which list Textual Cuts and Variations.

The cutting in the first scene removes references to the wars with Norway, which has the effect of concentrating attention on the apparition. John Russell Brown regretted the loss of lines 158-165, which "removed the memory of Christian order". This he saw as an example of the director's playing down the moral theme. The loss of Act I Scene 1 line 165 produces a problem in the prompt book. The Stage Manager has taken out Horatio's name in preparing his prompt copy and the ensuing speech reads as a continuation of Marcellus's lines. This is probably an oversight, since Marcellus's name appears again for the last two lines of the Scene.

The substitution of "fleshmonger" for "fishmonger" in Act II Scene 2 drew the comment from Kenneth Tynan that this was one of the silliest of the new readings.[5] It has the effect of underlining Hamlet's attitude to Polonius's use of Ophelia in the Nunnery Scene, though Langham does not bring Hamlet in to hear the plan for himself a few lines earlier.

The loss of the King's aside in Act III Scene 1 lines 49-55 ("How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience") leaves the audience without a first indication of his remorse. The actor is left to express all in the prayer scene. The cutting and variations in the Queen's willow speech are untidy: "come" is preferred to "make" (Act IV Scene 7 line 167), but the consequent adjustment of "Therewith" to "There with" is not made. A similarly unsound grammatical structure results from the cutting of line 172 ("Clamb'ring to hang, an envious sliver broke") and the sense also is changed. Some of the heaviest continuous cutting takes place at the beginning of Act V Scene 2, removing Hamlet's account of the voyage to England.

This, together with the cuts following the Osric scene, has the effect of moving the action more swiftly to its climax at the expense of the explanatory and ruminative passages. The prompt book adds the word "there" to Act V Scene 2 line 265 ("Set me the stoups of wine upon that table"). One must assume that the Stage Manager has omitted to cut "that table" to accommodate it. There is, in fact, no furniture on the stage - which prompted J.C. Trewin to observe: "The mind swings instinctively to 'Alice', 'There were no birds to fly'".[6]

The director has written what the prompt book calls Reaction Lines for the court in the public scenes. These are recorded on a separate sheet in the prompt book (see appendix G) and assigned to individual characters. The prompt book also inserts lines to precede and follow a number of the scenes. These produce an overlapping effect designed to give the production pace. They also produce a sense of location in the unspecific setting by suggesting corridors and ante-chambers through which characters pass. This technique is supplemented by bringing characters on to open a scene before those from the previous scene have left.

The prompt book gives a good deal of precise positioning on the tight area of the octagon and the surround, which will not be reproduced in the account of the production which follows, unless it is needed to clarify the action.

The lights go up on Francisco, pacing the octagon. He halts downstage, back to the audience. The critic of The Scotsman commented: "The entry of Horatio and the others is the signal for a restlessness of mood which, in its way, is as eloquent as the hectic and erratic movement with which Barrault's famous production of 'Hamlet' opened." (16 July 1956). As the stroke of a bell the Ghost appears from the orchestra pit to a group huddled upstage. The shape of the octagon

quickly begins to affect movement patterns as the characters circle the Ghost which makes its way upstage searching with sightless eyes, his head slowly turning, to disappear finally down the lift steps. Its second appearance is from down left and as it advances Horatio backs before it, until, at the cock crow, it swivels round and leaves by the same exit.

The entrance of the court, accompanied by a fanfare from the orchestra, presents the first full stage picture (See plan 1 Appendix H) and establishes that thrones will be dispensed with throughout. Hamlet does not make his appearance with the court. Two bishops are added to the group of attendants and Lords of the Council, as they are termed by the prompt book. Claudius's first speech is delivered, his Queen at his side, from up left centre. This is a sycophantic court and the speech is punctuated with noises of approval which emerge in the form of Reaction Lines. Claudius makes public statement of his affection for Gertrude by kissing her hand as he refers to their marriage. Cornelius and Voltimand are handed their articles in a despatch box by Polonius, establishing at an early stage his involvement in the affairs of state. There is a general re-grouping as the ambassadors leave and the focus shifts to Laertes. Hamlet enters from the ramp up right on line 43a. Two lines later he is noticed by Polonius whose reaction catches the eye of Claudius. He in turn relays the fact to Gertrude in an exchange of glances. The courtiers burst into applause at Claudius's announcement that Hamlet is heir to the throne. But the effect is contrived and Claudius betrays his wariness as he circles the stage to reach his Queen, observing hollowly "Why 'tis a loving and a fair reply". The general exit is marked by a further fanfare.

Left alone, Hamlet delivers his soliloquy standing rigidly to

attention, except for one sweeping move downstage on line 135a, staring out into the auditorium. He stands, back to the audience, to receive news of the Ghost from Horatio, his position focussing attention on what Horatio has to say at the expense of his own reaction. This positioning of actors, which owes something to theatre-in-the-round and here stems from the octagonal shape, is one which the director will use throughout the production.

Sailors bringing on trunks suggest not only Laertes's departure but also establish Denmark's seaboard. The opening business shows a playful and affectionate relationship between brother and sister, as Ophelia rushes on brandishing a foil, chased by Laertes. This introduction of the fencing weapons, which are to accompany him to Paris, adds credibility to his mastery of the art and this light-hearted play contrasts with their use as instruments of death at the end of the tragedy. Laertes kisses Ophelia and returns the foil to its box. She, with only half an ear on his advice, is quietly singing "St Valentine's day" - a tune she will recall in her deranged state. At times they sit on the floor together, backs against the luggage, suggesting childhood attitudes. Reynaldo is brought on with Polonius, which serves to identify him for the later scene. He helps Laertes put on his cloak. Polonius makes doubly sure that Laertes has taken his precepts to heart by handing them to him on a piece of parchment, together with a purse of money taken from Reynaldo's safe-keeping. A final kiss for Ophelia, and Laertes departs down the orchestra pit steps, preceded by attendants. Polonius, Ophelia and Reynaldo wave him goodbye. Ophelia, making to go, is stopped by her father, who dismisses Reynaldo. The moves during their private encounter suggest Polonius pursuing Ophelia, who is trying to escape the force of his words.

Without break in the action, Horatio appears on the ramp and Marcellus crosses to encounter him, startling them both. Hamlet enters from the lift steps, stopping the others dead in their tracks. An atmosphere of fearful expectancy is established. Fanfares and cannon-fire (for which a drum was used) punctuate the scene, together with a bell which arrests the pacing figures and turns Hamlet's mind to the ruminative passage "So oft it chances in particular men". His words cause Horatio and Marcellus to focus their gaze on him, recognising his self-analysis. The Ghost makes a long slow entrance from the lift steps, causing Horatio and Marcellus to cower into the black surround curtains, where they continue to edge round the stage while Hamlet is drawn as if magnetised by the beckoning ghost to the ramp exit. Horatio and Marcellus follow, picking up Hamlet's cloak, which has fallen from his shoulders. The Ghost re-enters down left to circle the stage, while Hamlet sinks to his knees, sitting back on his heels. The Ghost moves in behind him and the information is imparted with both gazing out into the auditorium. This lack of direct contact prompted one critic to compare them at this moment to a ventriloquist and his doll.[7] Hamlet falls forward onto his hands as the weight of what he has heard bears down upon him and the Ghost retreats to the upstage rostrum where it finally disappears down the steps. Hamlet's soliloquy is delivered from this hunched position until he straightens himself to a kneeling position as he bids his sinews "bear me stiffly up". He sits back on his heels as to contemplates "O most pernicious woman" and he forces the fact of his uncle's villainy into his head by beating his forehead. He draws his sword and holds it, hilt extended, for the final swearing. Horatio and Marcellus, recognising his shaken state, kneel with him. Their movements in the ensuing sequence suggest that they are still

PLATE V

"Words, words, words".

Hamlet's encounter with Polonius, Act II Scene 2.
George Howe and Alan Badel

solicitous of him as Hamlet prowls about trying to locate the 'old mole'. As they exit, Marcellus wraps him in his cloak, which has again fallen from his shoulders.

The Reynaldo scene is retained, with the loss of some twenty of its seventy odd lines, and as Ophelia is ushered off by Polonius, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are already onstage. The court continues its vocal involvement in public speeches as the ambassador from Norway addresses the court. Polonius holds the centre of the stage to make his disclosures while the King paces around, pausing occasionally, back to the audience, to focus attention on Polonius. Langham does not bring Hamlet on to overhear the plot to use Ophelia. He makes his appearance following Claudius and Gertrude's exit at line 170, circling the stage and pointedly ignoring Polonius. The production photograph which records this encounter shows Hamlet waving at Polonius a copy of Lyra Anglicana open at a poem entitled "Words". The book is later thrown at Rosencrantz in jocular greeting.

Much use is made of the stage shape as the serpentine patterns of movement show Rosencrantz and Guildenstern and Hamlet warily sizing each other up. A flourish of trumpets signals the arrival of the players who are heard off-stage some two dozen lines before their entrance. Polonius adopts a more peremptory manner of attracting Hamlet's attention this time, clapping his hands sharply, and once more gets mocked for his pains as Hamlet imitates him. He continues in the same vein of gentle mockery as, hand on Polonius's shoulder, he trots out the line about Jephthah's daughter. The players enter from the ramp, with trunk, skip, banners and a drum, the Player King carrying a guitar. He attracts Hamlet's attention by plucking at a string and a speech is requested. The Player Queen watches, one knee on the trunck, her banner leaning against it. The rest of the players

seat themselves, backs to the audience, to focus attention on the Player King, and Hamlet seats himself on the skip. The general lighting is lowered save for the central area, and Polonius himself is eventually drawn into the circle as he compliments the Player King on his delivery.

Hamlet delivers the "rogue and peasant slave" soliloquy seated on the skip, rising, his hands above his head, to cry "O Vengeance!" He begins pacing between the skip and the trunk on "About my brains", a moment which signals a twenty five second fade-in of lighting as he clarifies his thoughts. He moves downstage and on the final decisive couplet, swings round the stage and exits up left.

During the King's discussion with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, the players clear the skip, trunk and banners. Claudius and Polonius withdraw. Significantly they do not use the banner as a means of concealment; this will be kept exclusively for the Closet Scene. Hamlet entering from the lift steps makes his way downstage. "To be or not to be" was delivered in a tone of self-pity and resignation directly at the audience. This kind of treatment gave rise to the criticism that Badel used the soliloquies as disconnected set speeches in which he failed to make contact with his audience. It is, however, an indication of the audience's inflexible approach to the play that one critic can confidently instruct Badel in vocal technique:

> "The soliloquies were spoken not in the deep beauty of a rich cello for which they are scored, but a tenor voice which never wavers."[8]

The Nunnery Scene is played without reference in the prompt book to the fact that Hamlet is aware of eavesdroppers (he has not been brought in to overhear the plotting earlier). Ophelia offers him a necklace, which she is wearing, a ring and the book her father has given her as the "remembrances". Hamlet takes her face in his hands

to underline "Why woulds't thou be a breeder of sinners?" and as he bids her farewell for the first time he moves up to the ramp, suggesting that he is ready to depart. His move to the downstage edge of the octagon on his second farewell suggests that he is bidding her depart. As he exits,Polonius is brought on alone to overhear Ophelia's lament, "O what a noble mind is here o'erthrown", followed by Claudius at line 158, who also overhears the end of the speech. Polonius, advancing towards her, shows his concern, but she breaks away at his touch. No bond of sympathy has been established between Polonius and his daughter. Claudius announces Hamlet's departure for England and Ophelia drops the rejected necklace and book as her father talks of Hamlet's neglected love. Polonius picks them up. Claudius is left alone and,having delivered the final couplet, turns, hands clasped behind his back,and moves quickly up the ramp. The accompanying music gains in momentum and the lights fade, bringing the first part of the play to an end.

The second part opens with a bustle of activity. Attendants and players, including the Player King and Queen lay a red felt carpet, fastening down the corners with bolts. A small rostrum and two delicate gilt chairs are set on the down right surround along side 2, and upstage of it a large stool along side 3. A bunch of players tune their instruments, the Player King and Player Queen rehearse their mime centre stage and the First Player wanders down the ramp reciting his lines as Lucianus ("Thoughts black, hands apt..."). The players draw together as Hamlet addresses them. As they depart Hamlet moves Claudius's chair into position on the rostrum as if to ensure him a good view of the play and stands contemplating it until Polonius interrupts his thoughts. The court enters and Horatio takes

up his place below the banner while Hamlet stretches himself out on the floor centre stage. This calculated provocation halts the merriment for a chilling second as Claudius catches sight of Hamlet. A stool is set for Ophelia down left at side 7, where Hamlet will lounge at her feet. The entrance of Gertrude and Ophelia is delayed until Hamlet's exchange with Polonius is over. Laughter and chatter off-stage precede each entrance; the mood is light and expectant. Rosencrantz signals to the players to prepare and they assemble with instruments and props behind the banner. Hamlet leads Ophelia to her stool as he selects "metal more attractive". Polonius looks to Claudius for the signal to begin and on receiving it claps his hands twice. The orchestra plays and the players move to their opening positions on the rear rostrum complete with sword and cloak, recorder, cello and drum. Gertrude takes her seat in the downstage chair, Claudius sitting beside her. A stool is set for one of the ladies and the court is ready to hear a play.

A gong strikes, music plays and the Mime begins. The Player King and Queen are dressed in copies of Claudius's and Gertrude's costumes - a decision which J.C. Trewin thought a sad strain on our credulity - though in general the Mime Play, which was staged with the collaboration of Litz Pisk, was felt to be a successful feature of the scene. The accompanying music by Alexander Gibson was also singled out for commendation. A second gong brings the Mime to a close. Claudius has watched throughout. An attempt at applause by Ophelia, two lords and Guildenstern dies quickly. The court senses something amiss and looks are cast in Claudius's direction. The players retreat to the rear rostrum. The First Player addressed the prologue to Gertrude and Claudius and the Player King and Queen emerge to begin the play centre stage. A single note sounded on the guitar

suspends the dialogue momentarily and Hamlet interposes "That's wormwood"; music continues to accompany the scene. "A double tremolo on the guitar" is marked in the prompt book at line 214 ("But die thy thoughts when thy first lord is dead") as the Player Queen raises her hands above her head. Hamlet advances on Claudius and Gertrude as he drives home the point of "The Mousetrap", circling their chairs and leading the first player to The Player King as he bids him begin. The First Player kneels behind the Player King and Hamlet, eager to bring the issue to a head, speaks the First Player's lines with him ("Thoughts black, hands apt..."), breaking away at the end of the first line to point at the King as he continues to intone the speech. Claudius rises, followed by Ophelia and the rest; the "dead" Player King raises himself on an arm. Claudius ("a glittering reptile about to spit venom"[9]) crosses to Hamlet, looks at him, and exits. The response to Claudius's call for lights is not made until he is almost off-stage. Hamlet breaks into laughter and,stepping over the body of the Player King, moves towards Gertrude. She, visibly affected, leaves, followed by the court, the calls for "Lights" echoing into the distance.

Hamlet, meanwhile, has moved upstage to the Players who have remained, taken the sword and red cloak from the third Player and is using them to claim"fellowship in a cry of players". He struts about the stage reciting "Why let the stricken deer go weep" and Horatio advances to whisper "Half a share" in his ear. Hamlet continues his peacock sweep round the stage, finishing by swirling the cloak in triumph round his head in the manner of a bull-fighter and throwing it at the King's chair, which falls to the ground. Hamlet's request for music is answered by the players and a group of attendants begin to clear the stage of chairs and carpet while the

scene continues. Their activity in the background angered some critics who found "this by-play from the Royal Military Tournament"[10] an unwarranted interference with the flow of the action. It is obviously the director's intention that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern shall become embroiled with this manoeuvre. The prompt book notes: "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern struggle with the carpet as the scene is playing, stepping over it when necessary" - a further device to keep them off-balance in addition to Hamlet's by-play with the recorder. The ensuing encounter is given a different slant by having Hamlet taunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern before an audience of players. The ebb and flow of the movement suggests that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are attempting to hustle Hamlet on his way, an attempt which comes to a halt on the line "I have not the skill", as Hamlet, handling the recorder as a dagger, turns the tables and they back away. Polonius is treated in like fashion, Hamlet bearing down on him until he leaves and Hamlet clears the stage.

Claudius delivers his prayer soliloquy from the step down right, moving up onto the rostrum to kneel at a bench placed there by the players as they cleared from the play scene. Hamlet raises his sword two-handed above the kneeling figure, sheathing it at line 191, "Then trip him...".

With Polonius ensconced behind the banner, Hamlet enters his mother's closet from the ramp and goes to sit, foot up, on the bench. Gertrude makes to escape towards the ramp on line 17 in order to fetch help but is prevented by Hamlet. Polonius's cry takes Hamlet to the banner and the sword thrust through it is absorbed by a dummy placed there for the purpose. He buries his face in the folds of the curtain as Polonius falls into view and comes to rest on his side, back to the audience. Hamlet looks round to discover the identity of his

victim, throws away his sword and picks his way over the legs of the body to approach his mother, where the lighting focuses attention onto the bench.

In the ensuing exchange, lockets worn by Hamlet and Gertrude establish the identity of Claudius and old Hamlet. The Ghost makes its final appearance from the lift steps. It pauses at the foot of the ramp, watched by Hamlet who is lying at his mother's feet. As it backs out at Side 3, Hamlet, now kneeling, points after it, addressing lines 125-133a ("On him! on him! Look you, how pale he glares!") to the Ghost off-stage. At line 133a the ghost is brought on again down right, hand raised in warning to Hamlet. He retreats once more at line 134a ("Why, look you there! look how it steals away"), the suggestion being that this second appearance was no more than the coinage of Hamlet's brain. The fact that there was no eye-contact between the Ghost and Hamlet lends weight to the idea.

The ensuing section is played mainly on the bench, Hamlet again confronting Gertrude with his father's portrait as he requests that she "go not to my uncle's bed". He extends his arms to bid her goodnight; she turns from him. Hamlet rolls the body of Polonius onto its back and drags it out up the ramp, pausing there to address the final goodnight to his mother. Diana Churchill's performance in this scene was described as being nervous and quick in movement, "'amazement' ... being registered in her bearing rather than in her actions or speech".[11]

The bench is struck and Hamlet discovered down left sitting at point H in a tight pool of light, which widens to reveal Marcellus leading the guard in search of him. Unsure at first in the darkness, Marcellus identifies him and calls in the others. They arrive with drawn swords, their points lowered. Hamlet has risen and on his line

"The King is a thing -" his pursuers step forward raising their swords menacingly. Hamlet, recognising the danger, adds "of nothing" and they lower their swords. The lighting has begun to build over a period of twenty seconds and the company, marching off up the ramp, is given the slip by Hamlet, who dashes off down left.

The assembling court takes up positions which describe a circle about the stage. Hamlet is placed at its centre. The King's opening speech brings reaction from the court as he bears down on Hamlet to tell him of his despatch to England. The stage clears and the advance guard of Fortinbras's army is already approaching.

Fortinbras himself enters to a drum beat, his arms crossed; the army comes to attention. A trumpet call causes them to turn upstage at line 4a and Fortinbras reminds the captain of the rendezvous. The second captain signals with a torch and they leave. Hamlet, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern weave their way through the soldiers as they enter. They are greeted by the first captain with a heel click. Making to go at line 23 ("Why, then the Polack never will defend it"), Hamlet is drawn back to ruminate and deliver his soliloquy downstage. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern have withdrawn, one behind the banner and one down right, and re-join him when he leaves. There is no direct suggestion of their eavesdropping on the soliloquy, but their surveillance is unbroken. As they reach the top of the orchestra pit steps Gertrude, followed by the first lady, makes her appearance.

The restless Queen seems to wish to avoid confrontation with Ophelia and makes to leave until restrained by her ladies. One holds her hand to prevent her further pacing as Ophelia is directed to her. Ophelia kneels at her feet, arms encircling Gertrude's waist. She sings as she weaves through the assembled company, breaking into a dance with "Tomorrow is St. Valentine's day". The ladies follow her

at a respectful distance as if to prevent her coming to harm. When she returns it is to Laertes that she runs, who holds her protectively. Ophelia puts down her flowers, retaining a daisy as she finishes her song. She selects rosemary to give to Laertes, places a pansy in the front of her dress and offers the daisy to Claudius. Lines 183-85 are addressed to Laertes as the mention of violets turns her thoughts to their father. She kneels to sing "And will thou not come again?" and rising makes a move half in recognition towards Laertes before she leaves. Gertrude follows her out. Claudius ushers out Laertes as voices are already heard off-stage beginning the next scene.

Ophelia's madness did not convince the critics. They saw her as a simpleton rather than insane and at best as "moving between modern realism and Shakespeare's pretty fantasy".[12]

Returning to plot Hamlet's death, Claudius and Laertes circle and cross the stage as the plan unfolds. Claudius takes out Laertes's sword to give point to the suggestion that Hamlet "will not peruse the foils". Gertrude delivers the news of Ophelia's death with Claudius intently watching the effect on Laertes. His preoccupation is now with the success of his plan and he needs to assess carefully the impact of this latest piece of news. Thus when he urges the Queen "let's follow" and she drifts away in another direction, it is Laertes he pursues rather than offering comfort to his wife.

The first and second clowns are nominated Gravedigger and Carpenter respectively. The Carpenter enters, whistling and wheeling a barrow, helped on by the Gravedigger. As they prepare to "make her grave straight" the Carpenter undoes the catches on top of the trap, placing the lid upstage of it. He takes off his coat as the Gravedigger kneels to fit a beam into the trap, placing slats at either side. The Carpenter takes a rag from his barrow to wipe his hands and dispatched

for a stoup of liquor, goes off whistling. The Gravedigger kneels in the grave, disappearing from sight as Hamlet and Horatio arrive. The skull is thrown up at the graveside during the second verse of the song, the Gravedigger finally lifting himself to sit on the edge. Picking up a rag to wipe his hands, he begins to converse with Hamlet. Horatio rests his foot on the wheelbarrow. As the Carpenter returns with a bottle, the funeral procession enters up left to the sound of a tolling bell, while Hamlet and Horatio remain concealed downstage. The Gravedigger and Carpenter load up their wheelbarrow, leaving only the slats. The priest nods to the Gravedigger and the coffin resting on the slats, is lowered into the trap at line 232 and a group of courtiers leave. Gertrude advances to throw three roses into the grave. Laertes kneels as he bids them hold off the earth and throws his arms in the air. The struggle with Hamlet takes place at the graveside rather than in the grave and at a signal from Claudius, attendants move in to separate the two, dragging them to opposite sides of the stage where they continue to threaten each other. Hamlet moves to look into the grave as he delivers the line "I loved you ever" (l.284). As he makes his exit up the ramp, Gertrude half follows him - her concern is obvious - and Horatio is sent after him. Laertes takes a last look into the grave as the Gravedigger and Carpenter close the trap and is led away by the still solicitious King.

Hamlet and Horatio are quickly on stage and the heavy cutting in this scene brings Osric speedily to the encounter with a precise click of his heels. The same formality is observed at his crestfallen departure, though he attempts to save a little honour by ignoring Horatio. Hamlet divests himself of his coat as the talk turns to the wager and he moves in to greet the King with the appearance of the court. Hamlet and Laertes shake hands and Hamlet takes gloves

from an attendant, throwing one to Laertes. Osric offers foils to both, and Laertes exchanges his for one held by an attendant. Claudius and Laertes glance at each other. As the goblets are brought in, the King, back to the audience, announces the conditions of the contest. A long fanfare is heard and Hamlet and Laertes take guard, supervised by Osric. The first section of the duel ensues (See Duel Plot and Stage Plan 20, Appendix I). An attendant raises his hand as Laertes denies the first hit and Hamlet and Laertes change sides to take guard again as Osric arbitrates. A drum, simulating cannon-fire, is heard. Following the King's intervention with the drink, the second section of the duel begins. Again an attendant raises a hand as a second hit is requested, the first attendant signalling a second burst of cannon-fire. As they begin play for the third time, Osric cries "Hold", tapping the floor to draw their attention to the fact that they have failed to observe the formalities for re-starting the bout. He sets them to play again and retreats. The third section of the duel ensues and Hamlet wounds Laertes.

The fourth stage of the duel sees the exchange of foils and Hamlet driving Laertes up the ramp at the rear of the stage. As they weave their way downstage again, through the crowd, an attendant is detailed to smear blood on Laertes's back. The Queen falls (side 2) and is attended by her ladies; Laertes falls and is attended by Osric,who supports his head. Hamlet comes down to his mother as he orders the door to be locked. Laertes, now supported against the knee of Osric betrays the King, Osric clearing his foil as he dies. Hamlet pauses momentarily and stabs Claudius with his foil, throwing it clear down the lift steps as he falls to his knees and pitches forward. He takes the cup from the second lady and, moving above Claudius, holds back his head and forces the drink down his throat.

John Russell Brown sees Hamlet's consummation of his task in the following terms:

> "At the end of the play the prince took a self-sufficient pleasure in mastering his dilemma - the almost aesthetic pleasure of an intellectual who performs, for once, an act which answers to his understanding. This resolution was hinted at throughout the performance in certain confident threatrical gestures, and, more specifically, in the pass before the throne of the King with a sword and the red cloak of the bull-fighter; this image seemed to be repeated at the end as Hamlet stood momentarily poised before the bull which he had mastered."[13]

Hamlet approaches his mother's body down right to bid her adieu and then retreats to the centre where he wrests the poisoned cup from Horatio. He completes his speech, back to the audience. Two maroons explode offstage announcing the arrival of Fortinbras and Hamlet dies, falling face down, his head turning at the last moment, drawing gasps from the court. The death touched the audience, the critics variously recording its simplicity, an absence of sentimentality and the rueful and astonished smile with which he delivered "I am dead, Horatio".

The entrance of Fortinbras is a cue for the Lords of the Council, the ladies and Osric to leave. As Fortinbras takes up a position centre stage, Horatio hides the poisoned cup beneath his cloak. As a final mark of respect, Fortinbras divests himself of his own cloak and gives it to the first captain who wraps it round the body of Hamlet. The final line is held while the soldiers clear the bodies of Claudius, Laertes and Gertrude. A soldier goes to the foot of the ramp with a banner and another to the foot of the corpse. Hamlet's body is carried in procession, headed by Fortinbras, up the ramp to the accompaniment of cannon and trumpet. As they reach the top, the final blackout ends the play.

Just as Michael Benthall eight years before had tried to change

accepted attitudes with his Victorian production of Hamlet, so Michael Langham had made an even more challenging attempt to cut through the tradition which surrounded Shakespearian production. His bare stage had robbed the audience of the usual comfortable supports to the imagination and directed them to the text. In so doing, however, he had placed an emphasis on the acting which it was not entirely successful in sustaining. At the centre of the play was a talented actor who lacked the stature, physical, vocal and spiritual, to engage the audience, while around him the uneven performances of the rest of the cast lacked a supportive coherence. Harry Andrews's Claudius generally received good notices, with only the odd dissenting voice, but Diana Churchill's performance as Gertrude was regarded as no more than "serviceable". George Howe's speed of delivery could not disguise a boring Polonius and Dilys Hamlett's playing of Ophelia's mad scenes reminded The Spectator's critic of "a debutante who has got tight at a hunt ball" (20 April 1956).

The firm hand of the director held the production together and his over-all vision of the play was evident in the stark and individual staging. J.C. Trewin absolved Alan Badel from the worst excesses of the modern actor, but, nonetheless, saw his Hamlet as too introspective:

> "Some modern actors do not act at all: they behave. Mr Badel is at least resolved to feel and to taste every line. He does, but all that comes over ... is a curious sultry gloom ... Mr Badel, though he feels so deeply himself, cannot communicate."[14]

An audience demands much of its Hamlet, perhaps most of all a point of identification. They were not happy with this "Prince of Limbo"[15] and Badel became the whipping boy. The first-night notices were severe, so much so that The Birmingham Post critic returned to review the production later in the season, paying special attention to Badel's performance. He found an improvement in vocal technique and a less

consciously studied treatment of the soliloquies. He was even led to ponder on the advisability of reviewing first-night performances, though ultimately the critic gave way to the journalist and he came down in favour of the first impact. Richard David may have put his finger on the problem which dogged Badel:

> "His reading of the part was deeply felt and intelligent; but he lacks precisely that magnetism that Scofield possesses."[16]

Responsibility for the production's shortcomings was, however, placed finally with Michael Langham. It was acknowledged that in attempting to say something new with Shakespeare's plays, the director might well be led to "an excess of virtuosity", and although the critic of The Spectator felt that there was nothing wrong with that, it must not set at naught the author's poetry and the actor's talents. Perhaps the last word should go to the critic of The Birmingham Post who, having taken account of its growth and development throughout the season, must still conclude:

> "The production, I feel, remains wrongly portentous, even if a great deal of acting has risen."
>
> (17 October 1956)

Hamlet

1958

Director: Glen Byam Shaw

Hamlet: Michael Redgrave

PLATE VI

Michael Redgrave as Hamlet, with Ron Haddrick as Horatio
in the 1958 production.

CHAPTER 3

Hamlet Re-considered

> "Every age can sympathise with the self-dramatising of the very young: it is even part of their charm. But to a man patently old enough to have worked through it we cannot feel quite so indulgent."[1]

T.C. Worsley's reservations about a fifty year old Hamlet voiced a doubt which was felt by critics and audience alike. Michael Redgrave, an established actor of the English stage, was returning to the role of Hamlet after a break of eight years; his previous attempt had been at The Old Vic in 1950. Now, with Gertrude (Googie Withers) nine years his junior, the question of his age was critical. Attitudes were generally tolerant and certainly the production photographs show a mature man still possessed of a youthful physique. Much of the criticism, however, concentrated on a comparison between the two performances and Redgrave himself added to the discussion by acknowledging his indebtedness to John Gielgud. The publication of Redgrave's book, Mask or Face, had been timed to coincide with the Stratford opening and the critics duly concentrated on analysing the actor's craft. Such was their interest in comparing theory and practice that the critic of The Sketch was moved to observe in some exasperation: "Redgrave's performance ... has been argued to the last comma." (18 June 1958).

Glen Byam Shaw's production put Redgrave firmly at its centre. He was not the kind of director to seek prominence for himself; he had a reputation for serving the play and the actor. He encouraged virtuoso performances, though many felt that in this production Redgrave remained aloof from the rest of the cast; the closeness of

PLATE VII

Motley's setting for the 1958 production.

relationships, political and personal, was lacking. The production was simple, conventional and without tricks. The critic of The Birmingham Post spoke of it as being "like a plain text, well printed and with the minimum number of encumbering notes ... a craftsman's revival". (4 June 1958). Yet for all its virtues, a feeling persisted that it lacked excitement and theatrical inspiration.

Advance publicity had announced that the setting was inspired by Durer. The designs by Motley used fluted pillars, heraldic devices and panels, picturesque tapestries and ornamental ironwork. The stage picture was tastefully described by Rosemary Anne Sisson in The Stratford Herald:

> "Tall, silvered columns give an ennobling majesty. The court scene blazes with richness and colour ... This is not a Hamlet acted out on some indefinite platform. Instead, we move intimately about the rooms and battlements of the castle, never aware of ingenuity, but constantly warmed and satisfied by beauty and propriety."
>
> (6 June 1958)

Memories of Michael Northern's 1956 "octagonal breadboard" were thankfully buried.

The production photographs show an ornate setting with three pairs of pillars set at the rear of the stage. Narrow steps are built in between them at either side and a lower rostrum level gives access to entrances right and left. Three steps set parallel and at forty five degrees to the front of the stage lead down to a central rostrum. Apertures right and left are surmounted by heraldic devices.

The costumes were designed in heavy brocaded material with full cut and ample decoration. The dresses were worn off the shoulder with low necklines and heavily decorated bodices. The skirts were full with a train effect, sleeves were puffed and slashed. Gertrude's most opulent dress is complemented by an ornate collar of jewels, a

large ring on either hand, an elaborate crown and a be-jewelled caul for the hair. Ophelia's simple and undecorated dress is in marked contrast. The male attire consists of slashed tunics topped by a narrow ruff and slashed knee breeches with codpiece. Claudius's tunic features a heraldic centrepiece with decorative additions in the semblance of a chain.

The production, which opened on 3 June 1958 and ran for sixty seven performances, had an average playing time of three hours, incorporating two intervals. These followed Act II Scene 2 and Act IV Scene 4. The New Temple edition of the play was used, from which a total of 803 lines were cut, providing a playing version of 3,027 lines.

In the opening scene the background to the Norwegian wars is again cut, Claudius's explanations in the scene to follow being preferred. Cornelius and Voltimand remain, though their return is cut from Act II Scene 2. The director makes the decision to give a half-line in the Ghost's speech, "O horrible! O horrible!" (Act I Scene 5 line 80) to Hamlet, a helpful gesture to the actor, whose reactions are taxed throughout a lengthy speech. He is further helped by the cutting of some dozen lines from the speech. Polonius loses a number of lines throughout the play, mainly tortuous elaborations. The effect is probably more economically made without detraction from the character. This version of the text retains, though not in full, reference to the child actors, though Byam Shaw cuts, as did Langham, Claudius's aside in Act III Scene 1 lines 49-54, leaving Claudius to deal with his conscience in the later prayer scene. The occasional reading was criticised for being over-erudite, and the substitution in Act IV Scene 1 line 270 of 'Nilus"

for "eisel" prompted Kenneth Tynan in The Observer to refer to "a walking variorum edition of the play" (8 June 1958). The play is brought to a more speedy conclusion by some heavy cutting of Hamlet's account of the voyage to England and the Osric scene. The sheets of "Additional Cuts" in the Production Records suggest that Byam Shaw had a second look at the text,though nothing of major significance is included; they are mainly wordy elaborations and extensions of existing cuts. Not all of the new cuts are entered in the prompt book, and it is probable that some cuts have been reinstated.

The action of the play begins as the front curtain is raised to reveal Francisco with halberd, planted back to the audience, between the two pillars furthest downstage. After a brief exchange, Barnardo, also carrying a halberd, takes up the position vacated by Francisco. The critic of The Sunday Times felt that the opening was rather muted:

> "The soldiers on their frosty, frightening watch conveyed in their perfunctory exchanges no sense of cold or confusion."
>
> (8 June 1958)

Horatio is welcomed with handshakes and sits on the steps together with Marcellus, Barnardo kneeling, to await the Ghost's appearance. The pillars are used, as were those in the 1948 production, to provide atmosphere and partial concealment as the Ghost threads its way in from up left. The watchers rise and huddle together as it pauses momentarily before retracing its steps. Horatio continues to watch the place where it was last visible. It reappears at the opposite side of the stage, weaving its way again through the pillars. Horatio grips Marcellus's arm before approaching to address it. Menaced with a halberd, it retreats upstage and disappears finally

up right.

During a blackout a backcloth (referred to in the prompt book as the Court Cloth) is flown in. The central section, which backs the space between the innermost pillars, is studded with white points, while the outer panels depict huge heraldic devices. Three large emblems are flown in to complement those which are a permanent feature of the set and two low balustrades are fitted between the pillars up right and up left. Three standard-bearers hold silver-bordered banners on which the outline of a swan is picked out. The whole change is covered by music from the orchestra and the lights go up to discover the court in position. Rich costumes and ornate jewelry contribute to a stage picture which is both opulent and dazzling, and against which the black-clad figure of Hamlet is in sombre relief. There is a general bow, the purpose of which is unclear unless it be to encourage applause at the spectacle. Polonius, who is positioned up left with Reynaldo moves in and holds up his staff of office to signal the entrance of the King and the Queen. There is another general bow which is held until they are in position up centre. The King, carrying a truncheon, extends a hand to the Queen on his left as he demonstrates the unity of the new marriage. He plants a studied kiss on her hand as he announces that he has taken her to wife. There is another general bow as the King offers "for all, our thanks". Polonius hands him a letter, which gives rise to his statement about the war with Norway. The letter is handed on to the kneeling ambassadors, who then leave. A whispered message from Polonius turns the King's attention to Laertes, who approaches and kneels . Before leaving he bows both to the King and to Hamlet. The attention is thus turned to the Prince, and Gertrude once more takes her husband's hand, now in a conciliatory gesture towards her

son. She turns again towards the King as he tackles Hamlet for his "unmanly grief", further betraying her anxiety. His announcement that Hamlet will be his successor is greeted by yet another bow from the court and Gertrude moves to Hamlet, placing a hand on his shoulder as she adds her voice to the request for him to stay at court. Hamlet acknowledges the gesture,and Claudius is swift to extend his hand as if to reclaim possession of his queen and the train-bearers assemble to assist the procession from the stage, accompanied by music from the orchestra.

Hamlet begins his soliloquy downstage, moving up and pausing momentarily with his back to the audience, before taking up a position at the most downstage pillar. He delivers the greater part of the speech from this point. Muriel St Clare Byrne commented on the

> "Great variety, vigor and clarity in his speech and though his voice has not that extra music and magic which puts Gielgud's in his greatest moments in a world apart, he has the same mature, poetic approach to the great soliloquies - he just stands still and quite simply speaks them."[2]

Whilst the prompt book shows the final observation not to be strictly accurate, it is obvious that Redgrave's technique involves paying attention to the verse at the expense of fussy movement. The reference to Gielgud serves to indicate the critics' need for a yardstick against which to measure a new Hamlet. It is interesting that Muriel St. Clare Byrne should have chosen for comparison a Hamlet of the 1930s, one of Redgrave's own generation, and not a Hamlet of the fifties.

During the blackout which follows the end of Scene 2, a tapestry depicting a hunting scene is dropped in behind the two downstage pillars. The location is thus changed to the Polonius household, reducing the playing area to create a more intimate setting for the

family scene. The servants, bringing on a trunk and two boxes, one containing three foils, are followed by Ophelia. The prompt book indicates that she is wearing flowers around her neck - a preoccupation which will emerge later in her deranged state. She is quickly followed by Laertes, carrying a foil. Though the intention is obviously similar to the effect in the 1956 production, the foil on this occasion has no further part in the business. His greeting is met by Ophelia's offering flowers and he moves to embrace her. This Laertes is anxious to be on his way and he makes to go after his first speech. The first reference to Hamlet's love is marked by Laertes putting his hand to the locket about her neck, a token of Hamlet's affection which she will return in the Nunnery Scene. Laertes's next attempt to leave is prevented as Ophelia brings him back to counter his advice with some of her own. An embrace, a kiss for Ophelia and his third attempted departure is frustrated by the arrival of Polonius, followed by Reynaldo (an addition to the scene). Polonius adds a kiss on the forehead to his blessing as he bids Laertes make speedy departure, an admonition which now takes on a touch of irony. Polonius takes his son aside to deliver his homilies and the two servants who are to accompany Laertes are held back by Reynaldo while Polonius completes the leave-taking with a handshake. A final embrace for Ophelia, closely watched by Reynaldo, and Laertes is gone, taking with him Ophelia's parting gift of flowers. The servants follow,and Ophelia, also making to leave, is halted by Polonius's question: "What is't, Ophelia, he hath said to you?". Reynaldo has remained and overhears the ensuing conversation, his presence occasionally acknowledged with a glance from Polonius and Ophelia. A dutiful curtsey to her father ends the scene and as she leaves, she exchanges looks with Reynaldo. His role as an

eavesdropper has been well established.

The tapestry is flown out and a crossfade of lighting reveals Marcellus already in position behind it. Hamlet and Horatio join him from down right and there is a good deal of restless pacing until the ghost makes its appearance from behind the pillar up right. It moves centre, half facing Hamlet, who backs away together with Horatio, flattening himself against a pillar to deliver "Angels and ministers of grace defend us!". At the end of this speech the ghost moves upstage, beckoning Hamlet and looking back at him. A struggle ensues in which both Horatio and Marcellus are thrown off as Hamlet follows the Ghost up right. They themselves follow in turn, Horatio carrying Hamlet's cloak.

The stage is left empty for a brief moment as a crossfade of lighting establishes a new location. The Ghost enters followed by Hamlet, sword drawn. Hamlet drops to his knees as he utters "O God", looking up at the Ghost to query "Murder?". He sweeps his sword through the air urging further information to enable him "to sweep to my revenge". Redgrave in his book, Mask or Face, rejects the conception of Hamlet chosen by Olivier in the film as "a man who could not make up his mind". The critic of The Times analyses Redgrave's Hamlet in the following terms:

> "His tragedy springs not from infirmity of will but from a situation which surrounds him with problems so many faceted in their subtlety that only the stupid brain or the blunted moral sense could solve them satisfactorily."[3]

The gesture on hearing of his father's murder would seem to bear this out: he does not shrink from revenge but rather shows himself over-anxious to achieve it. He is not yet, however, in full possession of the facts. As the extent of his uncle's guilt becomes apparent this resolve is flattened and he falls face down on the ground. The

director gives Hamlet a half-line from the Ghost's speech: "O horrible! O horrible!" enabling him to voice his reaction. This accords with a similar decision in Act I Scene 5 line 80. But in the following line Hamlet picks up his sword again as the Ghost bids him "bear it not". He holds it throughout the soliloquy, kissing the hilt on "Adieu, adieu, remember me". Resolve, not self-pity, is the keynote. A similar determination is detectable as he kneels on the steps to set down in his tables details of the King's villainy. He is beginning to piece together the many faceted subtlety of his problem

The swearing scene which follows is notable for the addition of music at each request to "Swear", Hamlet falling face to the ground for the final one. He appears to be in a trance as he intones: "Rest, rest perturbed spirit" and Horatio kneels to help him to his feet. He is met with a bewildered stare; Hamlet scarcely recognises him. Horatio wraps the cloak he has continued to hold about Hamlet's shoulders and for a while supports him. Hamlet finally breaks away and exits.

The tapestry cloth is flown in again and Polonius with purse and letters enters,followed by Reynaldo who carried a casket, a writing pad and pencil. Laertes's servant follows, equipped with carpet bag, and patently ready for departure, so that Polonius and Reynaldo are forced into a corner to plot the spying mission. The money and letters are handed over to Reynaldo,who deposits them in the casket. He casts nervous glances in the direction of Laertes's servant as Polonius begins to issue instructions. The servant is shifting his bag from one hand to another. Polonius, taking the point, moves away with Reynaldo, where they talk confidentially. Reynaldo takes out the pad to write down Polonius's instructions, while the servant continues to fidget with his bag. Reynaldo's

exit is punctuated by a series of obsequious bows as he backs out, followed by the servant.

The tapestry having been flown out and replaced by the Court Cloth, a table and chairs with black cushions are set left centre and an ottoman upstage. Lights go up with the court already in position; Osric is making himself busy. The King and Queen, attended by two ladies, enter and sit at the table left centre. The greeting of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern is accompanied by much bowing and a burst of laughter from the pair turns the Queen's line "Thanks Guildenstern and gentle Rosencrantz" into a joke. Polonius approaches with Hamlet's letters and the court is dismissed in various stages as the disclosures grow more serious. Osric, who has been much in evidence, is the first to go and finally the Queen's ladies as she requests "More matter with less art". The Queen betrays her continuing discomfort, taking Claudius's hand as she diagnoses the reason for Hamlet's distemper as "our o'er hasty marriage". The letter Polonius reads is one of many and he hands them to the King for his inspection. The King passes them on to the Queen. Byam Shaw does not bring on Hamlet to overhear the plot to use Ophelia. The King, taking papers from the table as he goes, is followed out by the Queen, leaving Polonius to confront Hamlet. Although the prince has not encountered Claudius, his glance off-stage as he tells Polonius "I would you were so honest a man" (Act II Scene 2 line 176) suggests that he senses collusion between the two. Polonius spends much of the rest of the scene pursuing Hamlet about the stage. Hamlet, with rising annoyance, slams shut his book as Polonius prods at it to make his point. With studied deliberateness he opens it again and shows the page to Polonius which contains the passage "old men have grey beards", throwing it finally onto the table as

his patience runs out with "these tedious old fools".

Byam Shaw uses Osric much as Benthall did in 1948, giving him business in the court scenes and suggesting almost a complicity in the intrigues. At this point he ushers in Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, acknowledging Polonius as he does so.

The book which has been discarded is used to turn Hamlet's thoughts to the purpose of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's visit. At line 268 Guildenstern idly picks up the book from the table and begins leafing through it. Hamlet sees him and Guildenstern shuts the book guiltily. Hamlet reacts to the prying, moving to pick up the book himself and drop it again onto the table as he detects "a kind of confession in your looks". At line 368 he shakes coins as he talks of the money given for Claudius's "picture in little" and sardonically tosses one of them to Rosencrantz. He takes their hands in welcome (line 374), but casts a look back at the thrones as he does so. He knows they cannot be trusted. Polonius's arrival to announce the players is a cue for further baiting and Hamlet darts quickly about Polonius as he launches into the attack.

The players enter to music, carrying cloaks, a staff, scrolls and book, two boxes, a banner and an assortment of musical instruments, including pipe, horn, gong and stick, drum and cello. Hamlet's rendering of the Pyrrhus speech is greeted with general applause and the player is handed a cloak for the second attempt. Hamlet demonstrates his annoyance with Polonius for his interruption and the players regroup for the third assay. Polonius again incurs Hamlet's displeasure with his interjection and Hamlet goes to shake the player's hand in congratulation as he returns the cloak. Hamlet's advance on Polonius as he requests him to "see the players well bestowed" is almost threatening and Polonius backs away. The prince

gathers support from the players as he admonishes Polonius to use every man better than his deserts. They laugh as Hamlet again puts him in his place. The Player is withdrawn from the departing throng by a whisper, over his shoulder. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern remain lurking downstage.

The greater part of the "rogue and peasant slave" soliloquy is delivered downstage until Hamlet in his rage whips round to confront the King's throne, kneels on it and stabs with an imaginary dagger. But as the mood subsides ("O what an ass am I"), he sinks to sit on the throne, leaning back into it as he urges "about my brains". He rises and moves away as he resolves to use the players to prove the King's guilt.

The first interval is taken at this point.

During the interval the court-cloth has been dropped in, the emblem flown out and red drapes attached to the two downstage pillars to form a canopy above the two thrones, which are centrally placed on a rostrum upstage. The curtain rises on the second part, accompanied by music from the orchestra. Byam Shaw plants the idea of the plot to follow firmly in the audience's mind by bringing on Polonius and Ophelia before the King and Queen make their appearance with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Claudius greets the news of Hamlet's enthusiasm for the players with mocking laughter. A look from Polonius urges a reluctant Ophelia forward to curtsey to the King and Queen as Claudius announces that her encounter with Hamlet will be overheard. Polonius pushes Ophelia unceremoniously into position to await Hamlet's arrival - a marked contrast to the hand-kissing courtesies of the King and Queen as Rosencrantz and Guildenstern depart.

Polonius hands Ophelia a book and a locket and retreats down right to eavesdrop with the King. Ophelia conceals herself behind the down right pillar.

The prompt book again indicates very little movement during the delivery of "To be or not to be". J.C. Trewin commented on Redgrave's improved handling of the soliloquies from his previous playing of the role:

> "We have frequently the spark and fire missing in 1950 and the ratiocinative soliloquies are uttered with an actor's vigour and an expositor's anxiety."[4]

Ophelia approaches tentatively and turns away relieved as she deposits the trinkets with Hamlet. His treatment of her in the Nunnery Scene is gentle; the admonitions are quietly delivered. The tempo changes with his question "Where's your father?" The point is rather heavily made as Ophelia gasps and opens her book to hide her guilt. Hamlet takes her roughly by the shoulders, lifts her chin and pushes her from him. In his playing of the scene Redgrave suggested that he could well be the "proud, revengeful, ambitious" man he describes, but that he did not wish the justice he was pursuing to be tainted by these defects. His departure leaves a sorrowing Ophelia gazing after him; she collapses in tears on the steps. Her attitude to her father and the King for the way they have used her is clear. She freezes at Polonius's touch and casts a cold look at Claudius as she goes, leaving them to plot their next assault alone.

Four candelabra are set at the back of the stage: one in front of each of the outermost pillars, the remaining two behind each throne. Centre stage,an oval-shaped carpet is placed and two mounds painted with vegetation, one sprouting a small tree, are set on it. These provide a platform for Hamlet's address to the players,

which he delivers with an urgent enthusiasm. Warming to his task, he sits on the bank and the players laugh, recognising their own shortcomings, as he expounds the actor's technique. The parallel with Redgrave's own analysis of the actor's art in Mask or Face cannot have escaped the audience.

Preparing for the more serious business, Hamlet divests himself of his coat, handing it to Horatio, and ruffling his hair to produce a wild look, sits on the steps. His first exchange with the King is conducted from this position. He rises to continue his baiting of Polonius,who backs away remembering earlier encounters. Hamlet thrusts an imaginary sword into him as he puns on the death of Caesar. Polonius removes himself to the protection of the King, taking up a position between the thrones. The court settles down for the play, Ophelia sitting on a stool up right centre with Hamlet beside her. The King takes a goblet from a servant and offers it also to Gertrude. The candles are extinguished and the servants lean over the balustrade to watch. The Dumb Show, praised by the critics, was performed in balletic style and accompanied by music from the orchestra. The timing of Hamlet's interpolations was also praised and his urging on the actors recalled the advice he had offered them earlier, showing the same critical understanding of their work.

A gong is sounded to bring The Dumb Show to an end and again to begin the play. It is staged in the central area and Hamlet who has been watching, back to the audience, rises and goes to address his mother from behind the King's chair. His head thrust between the two produces a mildly comic effect. The King's rise is underlined by Ophelia knocking over her stool. He descends to the scene of the action and in answer to the Queen's "How fares my Lord?" strikes the First Player, who staggers back to be caught by two of his fellows (a

PLATE VIII

"You shall see anon how the murderer gets the love
of Gonzago's wife",

Act III Scene 2.

piece of business which the critic of The Sunday Times thought to be misconceived. The court fades discreetly from the scene, affecting not to see the King's anger. Hamlet crows his triumph from the top of the players' mound, moving up to the King's throne to deliver the "pacock" line directly to it. As the players move in to clear their props, Hamlet, well pleased with their efforts, hands the first player a purse and dons his coat, which Horatio has given to him. The pipe, which Hamlet has taken from the First Player, is neatly used to add to the foolery when he encounters Polonius. He holds it up as a telescope to study the cloud shaped like a weasel, offering it for Polonius to study the "whale".

The audience is prepared in Hamlet's short soliloquy for the violence at the beginning of the Closet Scene which follows. As he ruminates on his mother's fate, he draws his dagger in illustration of the line:

"I will speak daggers to her but use none"

At which point he hurls the dagger into the rostrum.

The King makes an urgent entrance, his sword drawn. He will later use the sword to illustrate to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern the purpose of their mission to England. He now follows the departing Polonius, peering through the curtains after him to ensure that he is alone. He throws down his sword before moving into his soliloquy. The production photographs show a cross, positioned centre below the rostra. The prompt book does not give details, but it seems to have appeared through the grave trap. J.W. Lambert saw an unintentionally comic effect in the cross "which rose from the footlights and sank back into them like a microphone at The Palladium".[5] The stage has been further embellished for this scene by the addition of two curtains which form figured panels in the plain back-drop. No pillars

are visible. The cross is carved in the same elaborate style as the figuring on the panels.

The King kneels above the cross, head bowed, as Hamlet enters from between the centre curtains. He discovers Claudius's sword (a recognised solution to the problem of arming Hamlet for this encounter and the Closet Scene) and raises it as if to stab him. Redgrave delivered the speech "Now might I do it pat" almost in a whisper. J.W. Lambert saw Redgrave's Hamlet as showing an unusual amount of resolve and he felt that, to be consistent, Hamlet would have had to kill Claudius at this point. Thus the actor resorts to a whispered delivery - "a smokescreen of realism ... a brilliant piece of legerdemain" - but the critic must, nonetheless conclude, that "pace Mr Redgrave, a resolute Hamlet is a contradiction in terms".[6]

The centrepiece of the Closet Scene is a large double bed with elaborate canopy and bed-head set between two central pillars. The bed-head depicts an eagle superimposed above two half-naked figures and a crown above each pillow. Heavy drapes surround the bed, figured with the same elaborate patterning which is a dominant motif in the decor. The apertures right and left are also curtained and two tall candelabra are positioned up right and up left. The setting was lavish, but not entirely practical:

> "We have a double bed dead centre of an acre of stage with Polonius concealed at least thirty feet away, down by the proscenium arch. When Hamlet hears 'the rat' he has two flights of steps and one terrace to negotiate before he can plunge his rapier through the arras. In such conditions character, impact, significance evaporate."[7]

The bed is a focus of the action and Hamlet, kneeling beside it, takes in his hands the locket which the Queen is wearing as he speaks of

Claudius; his own father's picture he takes from his pocket. He throws the Claudius portrait to the ground in disgust, moving to rest his forehead against a pillar as he contemplates the enormity of his mother's crime. Gertrude registers a look of horror as Hamlet labels Claudius "a murderer and a villain". At the appearance of the Ghost, Hamlet sinks to his knees, lowering his head as he feels the guilt of his inaction. The leave-taking is tender and the Queen finally sinks onto the bed. The distraught Queen is discovered by her husband, who picks up his sword as she tells him of Polonius's murder. Transferring it menacingly from hand to hand he asks "Where is he gone?" as though he himself would wreak instant vengeance on Hamlet.

The fleeing Hamlet is quickly surrounded by courtiers advancing from various entrances, swords drawn and carrying lanterns. Hamlet escapes by the simple expedient of leading the court one way and doubling back the other. The black drapes are flown to reveal pillars and balustrades as he is brought before the King. The soldiers produce a flash of steel in the torchlight as they acknowledge the King's command to "Go seek him there".

Emblems are flown and the balustrades struck to present a bare stage for Hamlet's encounter with Fortinbras (Act IV Scene 4). Fortinbras's army is represented by six soldiers. The critics were divided on Redgrave's handling of the soliloquy. J.C. Trewin found "'How all occasions' spoken between the sunlit pillars to be strangely without gleam",[8] whilst Muriel St. Clare Bryne was led to compare him with Kemble as "he stands outlined against the cyclorama sky looking breathtakingly like the Lawrence portrait of Kemble as Hamlet, and just as majestic".[9]

The curtain brings down the second part.

During the interval eight extra steps have been fitted into the centre aperture to link with the permanent steps. Figured drapes have been added to fill in to the right and left of the central pillars and hung to form a canopy over the centre space. A note on the reverse of the production photograph indicates that later in the season the steps and drapes were dispensed with and the stage reverted to thesetting for the opening scene of the play, with the addition of the tapestry.

The action gets under way with Horatio and a lady-in-waiting who enter during "the overture". The Lady-in-waiting crosses the stage to usher in the Queen and the lute solo stops. The two ladies-in-waiting curtsey and leave, returning with a further lady to shepherd in Ophelia, who moves to Horatio laying her head on his chest as she enquires "Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark?" She looks up at him as she sings her song and beats the tambourine she carries. She is aware of her own confusion, looking questioningly at Horatio as she sings:

> "How should I my true love know
> From another one?"

The Queen moves solicitously in towards her but Ophelia breaks away, the doleful notes of "He is dead and gone lady" punctuated by a slow drum beat. Ophelia lays down her tambourine to mark the end of her song, but retrieves it possessively as the King moves in to her. She draws the King and Queen towards her as if to impart some confidence, but breaks suddenly away as she bursts into "Tomorrow is St. Valentine's day". She slaps the King's shoulder and moves into a dance as she sings "By Gis and by St. Charity", laughing wildly. She collapses, to lie on the stage as she concludes with "An thou had'st not come to my bed", placing the tambourine beneath her head as a pillow. She

rises, lays aside the tambourine and goes to kneel as she contemplates her father laid in the cold ground. A lady-in-waiting picks up the tambourine, but Ophelia jealously snatches it from her, banging it as she demands her coach, and kisses two of the ladies-in-waiting, scorning the one who has taken the tambourine. The two follow her off, Horatio and the third lady follow at the King's bidding. Dorothy Tutin was criticised for her too realistic playing of the mad-scenes. Rosemary Ann Sisson felt that they should conform to "a poetic and literary convention in which all is turned to favour and to prettyness. Harshness and ungainliness are out of place, and even the bawdy songs need to be sung with a sweet innocence."[10]

Her second entrance brings her directly to Laertes, and subsequently to sit on a step. Laertes signals his change of mood by sheathing his sword and kneeling at her side. Rising to move towards the King and Queen, she describes a circle with her arm in illustration of the line "O How the Wheel becomes it!" Addressing the King directly, she manages to recall his ill-usage of her with the line "It is the false steward that stole his master's daughter." She distributes the flowers: rosemary is dropped to the ground, fennel is handed to the King, rue to the Queen, a daisy to Laertes, to whom the line "they withered all when my father died" is subsequently addressed. Rosemary Ann Sisson recalls a moment at the conclusion of the scene: "she stands still with her back to us and gives a cry of sorrow which makes us forget every Ophelia we have seen before."[11] Patently her own reservations were forgotten in that same moment.

In the course of the plotting scene, the King makes great show of friendship to Laertes, frequently putting his arm around his shoulders. The ring which Claudius wears is used to suggest the idea of poisoning the drink. Osric is used as the messenger bringing

letters.

During a blackout the grave trap is opened and an ornate archway surmounted by a figure in flowing robes is fitted between the upstage central pillars. High railings fill in the spaces to the right and left of the central pillars and three heavily decorated crosses, each of individual design, are placed two to the left and one to the right of the central entrance on the rear rostrum. A decorated slab which will support the coffin is placed in front of the grave trap.

A notable change in this scene is the substitution of a sacristan for the Second Grave-digger, a decision which did not please the critics ("a lofty young man, needlessly contemptuous of 'goodman delver'"[12]) who found him too removed from the earthy humour of the scene. The First Grave-digger, not open to the same charge, spits on his hands before jumping into the grave and throwing out the skull. He punches it, to underline his oath: "A pestilence on him for a mad rogue". It undoubtedly strained credibility still further when the First Grave-digger sent the sacristan, his superior, to fetch him a stoup of liquor.

The funeral procession enters up left with the court in full mourning. The men have donned black cloaks and hoods, the women black dresses and veils. Hamlet and Horatio have hidden themselves down right. Laertes leaps into the grave and takes the body into his arms. Hamlet, leaping in after him, distraught, grapples with Laertes, who catches him by the throat. Both are hauled from the grave, Hamlet fending off Horatio and a courtier, who try to pacify him. He sinks finally onto the steps, head in hands, and the Queen, attempting to approach him, is also brushed aside. As he leaves, the court eases back, fearful of what violence he might do them. Horatio follows him closely, as do the Queen and the

court. Left alone with Claudius, Laertes goes to kneel at the grave-side. The King moves in to comfort him and escort him from the stage. Crosses and railings are struck for the final scene.

Muriel St. Clare Byrne declares herself pleased to see Act V Scene 2 lines 1-74 retained - "that destructive cut that has three centuries of theatre practice behind it". In fact some 34 lines are removed from this section, but in essence the account of Hamlet's sea voyage does remain. She regards the passage as important because it shows us Hamlet talking about his actions rather than his thoughts. Where the play before the King, the death of Polonius, the Closet Scene and the encounter with Fortinbras have failed, the threat to his own life has moved him to action:

> "Speak this Hamlet passage as experience of action as Redgrave did, and without any effort the whole man, the "changed man" is there - poised, accepting with a most poignant serenity whatever destiny may bring, knowing 'the readiness is all'."[13]

Throughout the scenes which precede the duel, Horatio is quietly solicitous of Hamlet, shown often by no more than a move towards him or a gentle touch. As the court enters, they both back a pace and bow to the King. During the preliminaries Hamlet and Laertes shake hands, while Osric provides first Laertes and then Hamlet with foil, gauntlet and daggers. The wine is placed on a side table and the judges for the duel take up their positions. Hamlet and Laertes salute the King and Queen as they prepare to fight. On Hamlet's line "set it by a while" the prompt book indicates that one of the courtiers removes the pearl from the drink. It is not clear, however, whether this was carried out since a typed section of text is superimposed and the business is not transferred. Hamlet during the pause takes off a gauntlet and throws it to Horatio emphasising his unpreparedness for the thrust from Laertes. As Hamlet wipes his

brows with the napkin, Laertes crosses to Claudius to confer about his next move. During the scuffle which ensues, Horatio attempts to part Hamlet and Laertes but is thrown off. Osric finally rescues the wounded Laertes who collapses onto the steps. Hamlet goes to attend to his mother and, as she dies, discards his other gauntlet to plunge again into the fray. The court falls back, silently acknowledging that the sword play is now in earnest. The King takes off his crown as Hamlet moves in to kill him. The blow is delivered with Claudius pinioned against the down left pillar. The King staggers down the steps while Hamlet retrieves the poison cup from the table and drops his sword as he forces the drink into the King's mouth. He moves across to shake the hand of Laertes as he dies. The struggle for the poisoned dregs finds Hamlet and Horatio on their knees, Hamlet turning towards Horatio as he dies. The body is borne away by the four captains up centre while others remove the rest of the corpses off right and left.

This production, in marked contrast to its predecessor in 1956, was lavishly conceived and executed. It had solid virtues, which pleased its audiences ("Glen Byam Shaw's production is to be praised for its steady drive and loyalty to Shakespeare"[14]). Settings were ornate and provided a pleasing stage picture, though some critics found them obtrusive and the use of so many steps restrictive of movement. The settings and costumes divided the critics into those who thought them a magnificent addition and those who found them pretentious. The latter group felt that they had contributed to the sluggishness of the production. Approval for the director was lukewarm:

> "Mr Byam Shaw, faithful as always to his dramatist, places his groups and poses his actors to let them make their words work as fully as may be."[15]

The production toured in Russia during December 1958 and January 1959, together with Twelfth Night and Romeo and Juliet. It opened at The Palace of Culture in Leningrad on the 19 December and played for four consecutive performances, and at The Moscow Arts Theatre on the 30 December, playing for seven further performances. Russian audiences welcomed the company and its repertoire, and Hamlet was rapturously received.

Some of the actors in this production undoubtedly suffered under Redgrave's shadow, none more than Mark Dignam, whose Claudius was dismissed as obvious, "more of the satyr than the capable king".[16] The critics were rather more tolerant of Googie Withers, attempting her first Shakespearian role. Her "lazy, torpid, doll-like queen"[17] had an easy dignity, though she was thought not to have extracted full significance from the Closet Scene. Cyril Luckham fashioned a neat, dry, almost likeable Polonius and Dorothy Tutin's Ophelia had generally good notices. Apart from some reservations about her handling of the mad scenes, she was praised for her verse-speaking and for the way in which she developed the character throughout the play. The critic of The Times commended her interpretation:

> "She gives a most moving account of the distressed child confronting a lover she does not understand and skilfully introduces into these early passages a hint of incipient mental fragility".
>
> (4 June 1958)

Her technique had been admired earlier in the season when the critic of The Financial Times had detected a moving development in her Juliet:

> "Miss Tutin makes it seem deceptively simple that this touchingly diminutive and childish little creature could suddenly assume the implacable majestry of a doomed and tragic figure."
>
> (9 April 1958)

Inevitably, most of the criticism concerned itself with Redgrave's performance. The critic of The Times defined it thus:

> "The Prince of the actor's imagining has the quickest mind in the court. He makes lightning diagnoses of men and their motives and it is by the very accuracy of these diagnoses that he moves inevitably to disaster."
>
> (4 June 1958)

Resolved and forceful, he led some critics to wonder whether such a prince would have vacillated for so long. Eight years earlier he had played Hamlet at The Old Vic ("one of the two really great Hamlets - the other being Sir John Gielgud's[18]) in a production which subsequently played at the Castle of Elsinore in Denmark. He was remembered as a "sweet but deeply melancholic prince";[19] the melancholy had now given way to sadness. His second Hamlet was a romantic figure, sensitive and virile, but humourless and not above being criticised for some muttered passages in the soliloques.

The presence of an actor with an established status and reputation in the theatre undoubtedly had its effect on the production:

> "His noble gravity turns the Danish court into trivial, frightened little people from the opening of the play."[20]

The critic of The Sunday Times saw the problem not as one of superior acting but misinterpretation of the balance of roles within the play - an over-intellectual Hamlet played against "a court of loutish morons" (8 June 1958), which had the effect of reducing Hamlet to a muted petulance. Kenneth Tynan offered yet another solution. He felt that the deficiency lay with Redgrave himself, who, he thought, lacked contact with his fellow actors. He analyses Redgrave's technique; first the eyes:

> "No matter how he rolls them, they remain glazed and distant ... He withdraws into his solitude ... Now this business of "connecting", of getting into emotional touch with others, is at the heart of all

> acting. It is the very touchstone of the craft. And that is Mr Redgrave's paradox. He has in abundance all the attributes of a great actor, without the necessary quality to be a good one."[21]

The problem may be traced back to a conflict within the actor himself, revealed in his book Mask or Face. His sympathies undoubtedly lie with the group approach to theatre, with ensemble playing, whilst his talent fits him for the big bravura roles. Given the introspective nature of Hamlet, theory and practice were unresolved in his performance.

Redgrave's Hamlet was not only isolated from his fellow actors but was also at odds with the time. His Hamlet arguably belonged to the thirties when he was of an age with the prince. A Hamlet of the fifties could perhaps only have come from an actor who had grown up since the war. The critics, though not openly hostile, were uneasy. It was possible to detect in their reservations the beginnings of dissatisfaction with the star system, which during the sixties was to become a full-scale revolt. The next Hamlet at Stratford, Ian Bannen, is in the fore-front of this period of change.

Hamlet

1961

Director: Peter Wood

Hamlet: Ian Bannen

CHAPTER 4

"A non-commissioned prince"[1]

In 1960 Peter Hall took over as director of The Shakespeare Memorial Theatre. He had already made it clear that he wished to establish a new regime at Stratford, a key feature of which was to be the formation of a permanent company: a group of actors, directors and designers working together, who would ultimately develop a house style. Hardly less significant was the decision to lease a London theatre, The Aldwych, as an outlet for selected Stratford productions and for the presentation of modern plays. Actors would thus be encouraged to work in both classical and modern theatre and not be restricted to the works of Shakespeare. From this base they would also be free to work in films and in television. In short, Peter Hall was looking to give the Stratford company a new role in the main-stream of modern drama and to shake off the ghosts and legends of his inheritance. In 1961 the name of The Shakespeare Memorial Theatre was changed by decree of the Queen to The Royal Shakespeare Theatre. Stratford had declared that it no longer wished to be seen solely as a memorial to Shakespeare, but as a theatre company aware of Shakespeare's and its own role in the twentieth century.

It was no surprise, therefore, that the first Hamlet of the new era was an actor in a different mould. Ian Bannen, born in Airdrie, had spent two years at The Gate Theatre in Dublin before coming to Stratford as a walk-on ten years previously. He had come to prominence in 1957 with his performance in Arthur Miller's A View from the Bridge, following this with successes in two O'Neill plays,

The Iceman Cometh and Long Day's Journey into Night in 1958, and the name part in John Arden's "Serjeant Musgrave's Dance" in 1959. He had done a considerable amount of work as an actor in television, which was still in its infancy, and at a time when actors were still categorised, he was not seen to have the right credentials to play Hamlet at Stratford. In fact he was one of the new breed of actors who fitted well into the Peter Hall plan.

Listening to him talk about Hamlet, we are aware of a new approach, a different way of exploring the part and expressing his findings:

> "He just lacks the ability to deliver the 'Sunday punch' ... Look at the business of not killing the King because he is at his prayers. The theological thing about not sending him to heaven is only an excuse, the real reason is his incapacity.
>
> I see him as being in a high state of tension the whole time. He keeps it bottled up inside him ... but he needs something to help him relax the tension. That is why he loves codding Polonius, jazzing it up with the players and playing around with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern."[2]

The influence of his background in modern drama is readily apparent and he himself recognised that there would be difficulties in adapting his technique to cope with Shakespearian blank verse. He professed himself acutely aware of the difference between the demands made of an actor when speaking verse and the "flat" tones used in modern plays. The critics, struggling to come to terms with this new Hamlet of the sixties, found Bannen's verse speaking one of the unresolved problems in his performance. W.A. Darlington spoke of his

> "delivering Hamlet's more impassioned speeches in a melancholy and monotonous nasal, while long drawn-out cadences sometimes suggested that the actor's words and his thoughts were running in imperfect co-ordination."[3]

Bernard Levin attempted to define Bannen's verse speaking technique:

> "For him a blank verse line becomes most of the time a set of three little bumps, evenly weighted and spaced and turning into the same level shout at the end."[4]

PLATE IX

"... a rough energy."

Ian Bannen with Elizabeth Sellars in the Closet Scene.

Strained diction, quavering voice, inaudible gabbling, these were some of the accusations which the actor faced in trying to prove that it was not impossible to bridge the gap between modern and classical technique. It cannot have given much solace to Peter Hall, who had announced that one of his aims for the new company was to improve the standard of verse speaking.

Peter Wood, who had previously directed Bannen in The Iceman Cometh, had led him into the role with the idea of Hamlet "as a man coming to the end of a dynasty which has become degenerate".[5] Bannen in turn used this decadence as a starting point for the "hysterical neurotic" he created. The critics revolted against the excesses of his performance, and Bannen confessed to overplaying the madness. In the midst of widespread criticism directed at this badly spoken, unprincely performance, one critic at least recognised a rough energy. Alan Brien in The Sunday Telegraph wrote:

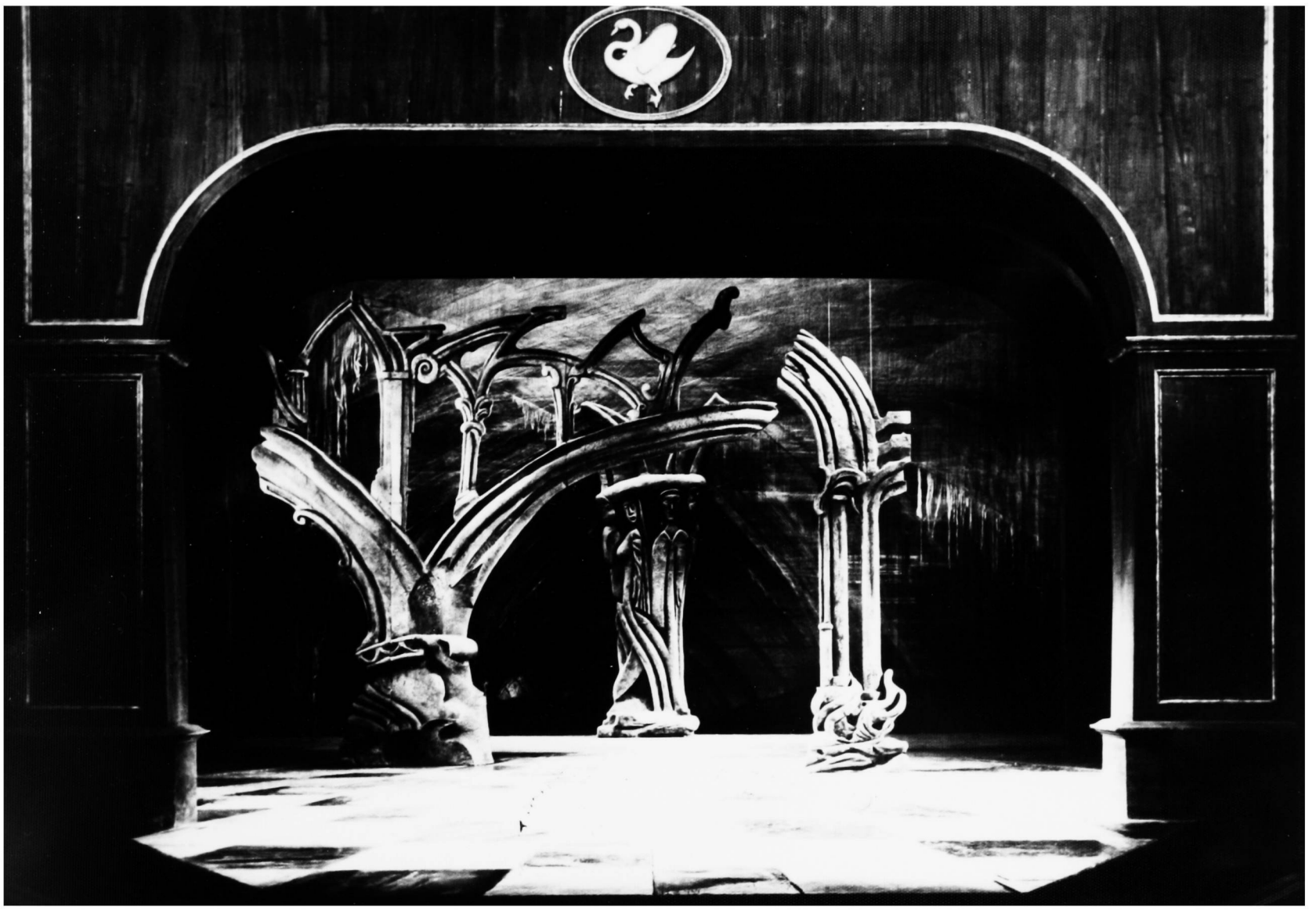
> "It is a performance which at its best has a bony agility, a prehensile sinewy-ness, that throttles criticism ... Ian Bannen's Hamlet is as alive and kicking as an unbroken bronco."
>
> (16 April 1961)

The new breed of actor had arrived at Stratford and Stratford had to learn how to handle him. T.C. Worsley in The Financial Times set the problem in its context:

> "Mr Bannen did not disappoint us in the sense that we came away thinking that we had previously over-estimated his abilities. But Mr Peter Wood had certainly misunderstood the nature of those abilities ... His initial error, I suggest, was to design a production into which Mr Ian Bannen could never satisfactorily fit."
>
> (12 April 1961)

Peter Wood, who had worked as a guest director at Stratford, Ontario in 1959, was invited to Stratford-upon-Avon the following year to direct

PLATE X



Leslie Hurry's setting for the 1961 production.

The Winter's Tale. In 1961, in addition to Hamlet, he directed John Whiting's The Devils at The Aldwych. Wood had brought in Leslie Hurry to design the set. Hurry was an experienced designer, whose first theatre set, coincidentally, had been for Helpmann's ballet of Hamlet at The New Theatre in 1942. He had first designed for Shakespeare's Hamlet in 1944 and had come to Stratford in 1949 to work on Cymbeline. He had subsequently designed at The Old Vic and for a number of operas.

The production photographs show that the proscenium arch had a very solid look during the 1961 season, with wood panelling surmounted by a swan set in an oval shape (the new Royal Shakespeare Company emblem, which also appeared on the programme). It has the effect of firmly containing the stage picture and Leslie Hurry's designs attempt to break this down by the use of a backdrop on which a series of filmy Gothic arches recede in tunnel-like perspective. Its purpose is to suggest rather than define and it will form a permanent background to the changing sets. There is a small apron projecting beyond the confining proscenium arch, with steps leading down into the orchestra pit to the right and left of the stage. The floor is chequered with huge brown and white squares. The pillars and arches, which are not a permanent feature of the set but flown in as needed, are massive but unfinished - the arches are cut off and the pillars free-standing, often incorporating huge, carved figures or writhing snake-like shapes at their base. The naturalistic pillars in the 1948 production have given way to abstract suggestion by 1961 and the designer seems as much concerned to reflect the mood of the play as to give his audience a representation of Elsinore. Robert Speaight defined it thus:

> "If you are going to have a pictorial as opposed to an architectural decor - if you want your decor to play an active part in your production - then Mr Leslie Hurry is your man for Hamlet ... The idea of putting Renaissance men and women in a Wagnerian Castle seems to me a good one ... Mr Hurry suggested from the beginning that he had seen the play as an embassy of death."[6]

The Elizabethan costumes ("decorative without being obtrusive"[7]) featured heavy, decorated tunics for the men, pleated, slashed or elaborately patterned, with ruffs at the neck and cuffs, knee-breeches and stockings. Claudius wears a light-coloured doublet, heavily jewelled along the vertical lines of its cut, with slashed sleeves. White tights and an ermine robe complete an effect which draws the eye to the King when it is worn in the full court scenes. Periodically he exchanges the doublet for one of a darker colour with frontal cross-hatching and upstanding collar. The Queen's dress, a heavy, wine-red velvet, has a very full skirt, which obscures the throne as she sits. The bodice is plain and fitted, with braid outlining the square, low neckline. A heavy necklace, set with large stones is contained within a long rope of pearls, which is caught up at the centre of the neckline by a large jewel. Ophelia's pale, brocaded gown is in marked contrast. In an atmosphere of general approval, Robert Speaight sounded one dissenting note on the subject of Fortinbras's costume, which he felt should have contrasted more strikingly with the general court to help his entrance in the last scene.

The production opened on Tuesday 11 April 1961 and ran for seventy one performances. The average playing time was two hours fifty minutes and there were two intervals, the first following Act III Scene 1 and the second following Act IV Scene 4. The text used was The Cambridge Pocket Edition, from which a total of 977 lines were cut, giving a

playing version of 2,853 lines.

The cutting in the first scene does not remove all of Horatio's references to the Norwegian wars. The lines retained concentrate attention on Young Fortinbras, which is a helpful introduction to his late appearance in the play. Claudius in the scene which follows delivers a fairly full account of relations with Norway and the ambassadors are retained. Their return, however is cut from Act II Scene 2

The Reynaldo Scene is cut, as it was in the 1948 production, though for convenience the prompt book and the production photographs still refer to the remaining exchanges between Ophelia and Polonius as The Reynaldo Scene.

The transposition of "To be or not to be" from Act III Scene 1 to Act II Scene 2 follows the First Quarto, though unlike Michael Benthall in John Neville's Hamlet at The Old Vic in 1957, Wood does not transpose the Nunnery Scene along with it. The resulting juxtaposition with the scene in which Hamlet mocks Polonius demands that the actor make the transition from one of the play's light-hearted moments to one of high seriousness with nothing more than the twice-repeated "except my life" to assist him. The soliloquy is now delivered without the eavesdropping Claudius and Polonius.

Wood takes the opportunity for some heavy cutting in the scene announcing the arrival of the players, including the references to the children's companies and Hamlet's "Jephthah, judge of Israel" passage with Polonius. Hamlet's advice to the players in Act III Scene 2 also loses half of its lines.

The effect of the cutting in Act IV Scene 1 is to change the character of this short scene which follows the Closet Scene. Gertrude's lines and all references to her are cut and the scene

is played with Claudius already knowing of Polonius's death. Its purpose is solely to advance the plot, consisting as it now does of Claudius delivering the news of Polonius's death at Hamlet's hands and instructions to find the prince and the body.

The transposition of the scene in which Claudius plots Hamlet's death with Laertes follows the practice of the 1948 production. The cuts within the scene follow a similar pattern, Benthall cutting some thirty three lines and Wood thirty nine. The critics now seemed prepared to accept its transposition to follow Ophelia's burial and felt that it gained something from the grim events of that scene. In consequence, the news of Ophelia's death comes more quickly after her mad scenes and the actor playing Laertes must react to The Willow Speech within four lines of his entrance. Neither is he able to experience the conflict of emotion which is possible when this speech follows the plotting of Hamlet's death.

J.C. Trewin was surprised at the addition in Act V Scene 1 line 166 of the phrase "'Tis a great soaker' ("a spatchcocked First Quarto phrase"[8]), and Robert Speaight regretted the loss of the "convocation of politic worms" (Act IV Scene 3 lines 20-30). This latter cut does in fact rob the scene of some of its menace and verbal duelling.

Little remains of Hamlet's account of the sea voyage in Act V Scene 2. Again Wood follows Benthall in starting the scene at line 56, though he is a little more niggardly in limiting the reference to two and a half lines in all as opposed to Benthall's four! Similarly, Hamlet's apology to Laertes is cut to two lines (Act V Scene 2 lines 224-225) and the scene moves swiftly to the duel.

The opening of the play is signalled by a bell which tolls six times while the houselights remain on. At the seventh stroke the houselights go down and a Blackout is held until the twelfth stroke when lights go up on stage. The lights are at low setting and the only thing immediately visible is the glint of steel from Francisco's helmet. The stage is bare and the ensuing scene is played against the backcloth of vaulted arches. The early movement patterns establish the dimensions of the stage, notably the apron, and Horatio and Marcellus enter from the pit. Their first lines are spoken off-stage and Horatio, who is carrying a lantern, moves to place it down left. The early exchanges had a taut strained quality, preparing for the entrance of the Ghost. When it appears, up centre, Marcellus and Barnardo retreat while Horatio stays to confront it. It disappears the way it came, pursued by Horatio, Marcellus and Barnardo. Its second appearance, again up centre, meets with similar reactions, Barnardo and Marcellus breaking to opposite sides of the stage while Horatio steps into its path. Once more it retreats to the spot where it first appeared and is pursued by the rest.

The set-change for the first court scene brings in an arch covered with a red drape located left centre. In front of it, two thrones are place, high-backed with fretted top and curling arms. A carpet is laid in front of them and two stools are placed left and right of centre, one downstage of the other. Six long banners are brought in by standard-bearers.

The King and Queen make their entrance to the assembled court from up left and circle the stage before taking their seats. Hamlet follows them, seating himself on the downstage stool; Polonius occupies the other. The King delivers his first sixteen lines from the throne, rising to take up a position at the centre of the carpet

as he deals with the affairs of Norway. Papers are handed to him by Polonius and in turn given to the kneeling ambassadors, who leave up left. Laertes comes forward at his father's and the King's bidding. He acknowledges the King's permission to leave for France by kneeling and kissing his hand. The King crosses to take the Queen's hand as he addresses Hamlet for the first time. She responds to the tacit request from her husband by approaching Hamlet and putting her arm around his shoulders, the King retreating to a position between the thrones. He advances to the centre of the carpet as he bids Hamlet "throw to earth this unprevailing woe", finally taking the Queen's hand to lead her from the stage.

Noel Willman who opened as Claudius and played until the 10 June was criticised for his flat, monotonous delivery in this scene. Paul Hardwicke who took over from him fared rather better. His speech was more incisive and "his arrogance was properly ill at ease"[9] throughout the scene.

Hamlet is left seated on the downstage stool to deliver his soliloquy, rising and crossing down centre on line 150 as he breaks into

"O God, a beast that wants discourse of reason".

Bannen succeeded in communicating both grief and tenderness in delivering this soliloquy and created a stillness which impressed the audience. The subdued rendering did not, however, please all of his critics, some of whom felt that his delivery of the soliloquies in general was more akin to meditation; they were critical of the speeches being treated as prayers.

The thrones, stools and carpet are struck and a fretted archway draped with a curtain is flown in right centre. A free-standing

pillar with cut-off arches is flown in up left. The departure scene opens with servants bringing luggage across the stage and out the other side, supervised by Laertes. Ophelia follows him. A picture soon emerges of a caring, affectionate relationship: they embrace, and Laertes is particularly solicitous of his sister's honour, pursuing her and pulling her close to him as he bids her guard her chastity. Laertes is not without his lighter side: as he sees his father approaching, he mimics him in the line "A double blessing is a double grace". As Polonius launches into his homilies, brother and sister exchange a knowing grin. Polonius persists, pursuing Laertes to drive home his points and blessing him at the end of his speech. Laertes bows and, moving first to Ophelia, makes his exit.

The set is cleared of pillars and curtains, and Hamlet, Horatio and Marcellus, the latter carrying a lantern, enter from the right pit steps. Hamlet and Horatio take up positions centre stage while Marcellus deposits the lantern down left. Hamlet paces around for a good deal of the early part of the scene. A maroon is exploded simulating canon fire to accompany the King's carousing. One critic felt his imagination to have been overtaxed when this was promptly identified as kettledrum and trumpet. As the Ghost appears up centre, Horatio turns to catch sight of it, backing away. The prompt book indicates that Hamlet turns to look at the Ghost only when he names it: "I'll call thee Hamlet". The same technique is used in the Closet Scene, where he keeps his eyes averted. As Hamlet makes to follow it, Horatio steps into his path and finally closes with Hamlet in an attempt to prevent him. Hamlet tries to force his way past and Horatio is joined by Marcellus and both try to pull him away down stage. He throws them off but they close in on him again, Horatio

taking him round the waist and lifting him bodily. Marcellus attempts to take his legs but Hamlet kicks out at him and throws off Horatio. As they both fall, Hamlet rushes out after the Ghost. Horatio and Marcellus join forces again and follow him out.

In Act I Scene 5 the prompt book indicates that two Ghosts are used to heighten the supernatural effect. The "Second Ghost" makes an appearance up left, crosses the stage, and exits left centre. Hamlet follows it in, taking up a position down left. The "First Ghost" then appears, also from up left and moves to take up a position up centre. These first moments of the scene are backed by woodwind in the orchestra. It seems strange that the director did not use this doubling of the Ghost in the opening scene of the play, where the lines: "'Tis here! 'Tis here! 'Tis gone!" provide an ideal opportunity.

Hamlet turns to face the Ghost as it bids him "Mark me". There is no movement during the course of its speech. Gordon Gostelow used the twice repeated "Adieu" in the Ghost's final line to produce an echoing departure by elongating the syllables. The soliloquy which follows is also delivered from a static position, save for a fall when Hamlet reaches the line "smiling, damned villain!" He then produces "tables" from his doublet and writes. Bannen continued to be criticised for his underplaying of the soliloquies, albeit with the connivance of his director. Alan Brien in his review for The Sunday Telegraph wrote:

> "They are intended as rhetoric and to deny them full-throated utterance is to diminish the actor's chances."
>
> (16 April 1961)

Hamlet rises to meet Horatio and Marcellus who are concerned for his welfare. They approach and stand one at either side of him. He

makes to leave on "Look you, I will go pray". Horatio follows him. Hamlet, returning, swings Horatio round and forces him to centre stage as the Ghost shrieks out his first "Swear". Hamlet drops to his knees; the rest follow suit. "Hic et Ubique" brings Hamlet to his feet and he leads the rest up right where they kneel again. "Well said, old Mole!" produces another move centre stage, where they kneel once more. Following "Rest, rest perturbed spirit" Hamlet raises them to their feet. As he leaves, he stumbles. Horatio and Marcellus assist and reassure him.

The scene is set as for Laertes's departure and, the Reynaldo Scene being cut, Ophelia enters up left. She is stopped centre stage by the arrival of Polonius who comes from the pit entrance. He moves directly to her and at the conclusion of the scene exits left, pulling a reluctant Ophelia after him.

An arras is flown in down right together with an arch (termed in the prompt book, The Ely Arch) whose central support pillar occupies a position up left centre. Beyond and through the arch-span a massive pillar, carved with apostle figures, is visible. Servants set chairs down right and left centre and place a table in front of the up left centre pillar. The Queen enters, accompanied by an attendant carrying a jewel box, and a lady-in-waiting. The Queen occupies herself during the first part of the scene in examining the contents of the box and two more ladies-in-waiting enter to attend the Queen. An attendant ushers in Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to await the King, and when Clausius enters in conversation with another attendant, his attention is directed to them. The attendant exits, while the King attracts the Queen's attention to their guests as he crosses to meet them. The attendant returns with goblets of wine, which he serves to the assembled company during the King's opening

speech. The Queen briefly approaches Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to add her welcome, returning to her throne to continue examining her jewelry, her attendant settling himself at her feet. The King goes to sit in his throne, Guildenstern kneeling to avouch their loyalty. Claudius mis-directs "Thanks Rosencrantz and gentle Guildenstern" and the Queen produces laughter as she tactfully corrects the error. They are both escorted out after finishing their drinks, Rosencrantz pursued by a servant to relieve him of his goblet.

Polonius enters and moves to a position behind the table, while the Queen, sensing that this may need to be a private audience, dismisses the remaining attendants. A glance from Polonius in the Queen's direction alerts Claudius to the possibility of news concerning Hamlet and he rises, moving down left with Polonius. The Queen is disturbed by the mention of her son as Polonius proceeds to divulge his information. During the course of the wordy preamble, Claudius moves to pour himself a goblet of wine at the table and goes to sit in the throne down left. Polonius takes up a position centre stage where he can address them both. The King rises and moves purposefully in to Polonius as he asks how Hamlet's advances were received, moving back to the Queen as he seeks corroboration of Polonius's theory. Polonius pursues him to reinforce his point. Wood does not bring Hamlet in to overhear the plot to use Ophelia and the Queen, moving over to place her jewel box on the table as she confirms his habit of walking in the lobby, draws their attention to Hamlet approaching off-stage. Polonius quickly ushers out the King and Queen and stays to lurk at the arras.

Hamlet enters, registers Polonius's presence and veers off towards the forestage. He continues to wander around the chairs, with Polonius in pursuit, finally sitting in the downstage throne,

while Polonius advances to deliver "still harping on my daughter" as an aside to the audience. He moves in again to Hamlet, who rises and goes to meet him, backing, in illustration of his simile of the crab, to sit once more in the same throne. Polonius returns centre stage to confide his diagnosis and remedy to the audience in another aside, before taking his leave with a bow.

He exits two lines earlier than directed in the text and Hamlet's line "You cannot sir, take from me anything that I will more willingly part withal" is projected after the departing Polonius, whose final line, "Fare you well, my Lord" is cut, as is Hamlet's rejoinder, "These tedious old fools". A pause is then marked in the prompt book before Hamlet adds "except my life, except my life, except my life". This is followed by a further pause as the connecting thought leads him into the transposed soliloquy, "To be or not to be".

The reflective mood is now broken, not by the sight of Ophelia but by the arrival of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. However, the high-spirited exchanges are short-lived and the mood changes again as Hamlet questions them about their arrival at the court. Guildenstern's attempt to make light of Hamlet's melancholy is unsuccessful and Hamlet makes to leave at line 268, "Shall we go to the court?". It is a brief gesture and he returns, to sit in the throne as he begins to toy with them at line 287, "That you must teach me". Bannen was criticised for his too glib delivery of the speech in which Hamlet analyses his condition, "I have of late, but wherefore I know not, lost all my mirth" (Lines 297-314). There was no searching for words; phrases like "this quintessence of dust" were found too easily.

The announcement of the players brings Hamlet to his feet in

anticipation and he moves swiftly between Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, drawing them downstage. The Players enter up right pulling a cart, containing a pile of books, a pile of scripts, a Water Bag and a violin, and carrying a chest. There is much initial noise and confusion until Hamlet draws the First Player centre stage, requesting a speech. The lighting is dimmed and drinks are served. Hamlet's rendering of The Pyrrhus speech was grossly overplayed and drew much applause from the watching players. The First Player, not to be outdone, recites "Anon he finds him" with great reserve. Bamber Gascoigne grudgingly conceded the coup: "This effective stroke depends, typically, on Hamlet's advice to the players about out-Heroding Herod being cut."[10] The First Player has taken a script from one of the actors to begin the speech, but, once into his stride, he throws it away. Greeted by Polonius's deflating response, he retires in a huff to sulk by the proscenium arch. He takes up his position again centre stage as Hamlet puts Polonius in his place. The stress he gives to "the mobled Queen" (line 506) is clearly marked in the prompt book as a first syllable accentuation, as is Hamlet's repetition of the phrase, "the mobled Queen", which stresses the second syllable. Polonius's follow-up, using a completed unaccented form probably indicates that he has mistakenly seen the significance of the repetition as a verbal quibble. As the First Player completes his speech, Polonius, now completely converted, approaches him in admiration and offers him a handkerchief to wipe away the tears of passion, a gesture which is greeted with great merriment amongst the players. The lights go up and Hamlet begins to organise the welcome. Polonius responds by indicating that the attendants should again serve drinks and the First Player leads a toast to Hamlet. Polonius shows out the players, who drag their cart after them, but leave their trunk,

PLATE XI

"Jack-in-the-box Hamlet."

while the First Player lingers finishing his drink as Hamlet moves in to plan the performance before the King. Alone, Hamlet contemplates the players' trunk.

One piece of business in this production overshadowed everything else. The critic of The Times described it in restrained enough terms:

> "When the players have gone he leaps into their costume trunk and thence encradled he delivers the rogue and peasant slave soliloquy up to the point where the lid of the trunk shuts on him and he can emerge saying: 'What an ass am I'. Such a Hamlet can have nothing of the courtly grace or easy social authority which is part of his fascination as a stage character."
>
> (12 April 1961)

Others were more forceful in their views of this "jack-in-the-box Hamlet",[11] one critic going so far as to suggest that his director should be "ducked thrice in the Avon and then consigned to the Stratford pillory".[12] Kenneth Tynan rather wearily attempts to work the business into a consistent interpretation of the character:

> "The idea (or so I guess) is to show us a man whose emotional development ceased at puberty; tied to his mother, he is scared of growing up; and the trunk into which he absurdly hops to deliver the rogue and peasant slave soliloquy is doubtless meant to signify the womb."[13]

J.C. Trewin was moved to write a whole article in The Birmingham Post on the subject of "Trunk and Chest", in which he examined, tongue in cheek, the incidence of trunks in Shakespeare's plays. He settles for Iachimo's in Cymbeline, Thaisa's coffin in Pericles, Prince of Tyre and Falstaff's linen basket in The Merry Wives of Windsor. His conclusion, however, is serious enough: "there the director has over-reached himself as so many do who, in an eternal search for something fresh, become hypnotised by the very word." (19 April 1961). The critic of The Birmingham Mail also saw it as an attempt to vary the familiar

business which sees Hamlet stabbing at the empty thrones (this was in fact used after the Play Scene). Bannen himself, consulted on the use of the trunk, defended it roundly:

> "It seems to be the most natural thing ... Hamlet is the sort of man who would do his thinking by putting his bottom on the hearth-rug and his feet on the mantlepiece It is rather gratifying that doctors have told me - since seeing it - that this is just the kind of thing a man in this state of mind would do."[14]

Despite plentiful photographic evidence of Hamlet ensconced in the trunk holding up the lid plastered with old playbills, the prompt book records no business whatsoever for this soliloquy. Later in the season it was abandoned.

The action moves on into Act III with Rosencrantz entering bearing a six-branched candelabra, which he deposits on the table. Guildenstern, the King, Queen and Polonius follow him in. After delivering their brief report to the King, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dismissed and Polonius leaves to fetch his daughter whom he sends to stand just downstage of the table. She appears vulnerable and apart, and the Queen moves to console her before she leaves. Polonius unceremoniously places her in the chair down right, putting a book into her hands as though baiting a trap. Claudius kisses Gertrude and ushers her out, returning in time to register Polonius's comment on the nature of the deceit. Wood, unlike Byam Shaw and Langham, allows Claudius the pricking of conscience which is prologue to the Prayer Scene, "How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience" (line 50), and Claudius and Polonius take refuge behind the arras up left.

The transposition of the "To be or not to be" soliloquy leaves Hamlet to come now upon the seated figure of Ophelia, deep in her book, and open the scene with "Soft you now, the fair Ophelia". He

places the book he is reading on the table and moves in behind her chair. She rises as she hears his voice and, taking off her necklace and ring, offers them to him. Hamlet takes them, but replaces the ring on her finger as he remembers "I did love you once". "Get thee to a nunnery" is spoken gently, and as Ophelia glances nervously towards the arras, Hamlet observes her and asks "Where's your father?" Her answer determines him to end the meeting and he makes to leave. Returning, he continues the attack, but turns to go at his second farewell. He returns once more to deliver his final condemnation and, throwing the jewels down at her feet, finally does leave. Bannen was commended in this scene for "his fine contrasts of sad pleading and anger",[15] while Robert Speaight found that he avoided an obvious pitfall: "here was a Hamlet who obviously loved Ophelia more than the sound of his own rant".[16]

Left alone, Ophelia kneels to pick up the discarded jewels and is joined as she concludes her speech by the King and her father. She remains kneeling until Polonius belatedly turns his attention to her at line 181, "How now Ophelia?" He dismisses her, with scant regard for the treatment she has received and returns to Claudius to plan the eavesdropping in Gertrude's closet. The King, moving to pick up the candelabra from the table, delivers the couplet which ends the first part of the play.

During the interval, the stage is set with an arch up right (termed the Ely arch by the prompt book) and a figured column (termed the Apostles column) placed beyond and up centre. A tall, free-standing pillar is placed up left centre, and three candelabra on tall bases are placed in front of each column. While the house-lights are still up, several Players enter to assemble the three

sections of a platform left centre. It faces right and is masked by a makeshift backdrop, consisting of a red cloth draped between two upstanding spears. As the platform is completed, two more players appear with a "cartwheel" (so termed by the prompt book) which they attach to a spotline lowered from the flies. Six attendants arrive from various points of the stage with lighted torches which they fix into the cartwheel. The signal is given by the attendant who remains behind, and the cartwheel is hoisted to hang above the platform and provide stage lighting for their performance. The orchestra has accompanied the whole procedure and at this point the houselights fade. (A disarmingly helpful note from the Stage Manager in the prompt book reads: "In case you're wondering, this was to create silence only!" Nonetheless, the business is an effective introduction to the scene to follow.) The atmosphere is deliberately casual as the two players sit on the step down left eating chicken, two more are playing dice on the platform and the First Player is engaged in idle conversation. Horatio's entrance goes unnoticed and he drifts to sit unobtrusively on the upstage edge of the platform

Hamlet enters and attracts the First Player's attention, leading him down centre to offer his advice. Bannen was criticised in the flamboyant delivery of these speeches for those very faults he was urging the First Player to avoid. Polonius makes his appearance with a retinue of servants and soldiers whom he directs to set out chairs and stools. They form a rough semi-circle on the right of the stage facing the platform. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern enter and drift downstage, Horatio positions himself behind the masking at the back of the platform, while Hamlet reclines on the platform itself. Despite the fanfare announcing the arrival of the court, the entrance is informal and the effect is one of an audience gathering for a

play. The King and Queen enter last of all, Claudius leading his wife to sit on the stool to the left of the armchair, which he himself will occupy (Ophelia will sit to his left with Rosencrantz next to her, Polonius will stand behind the Queen's throne and the courtiers ranged in a wide semi-circle behind, stretching away up centre beyond the apostles' pillar). Claudius moves to the corner of the platform to address Hamlet, returning swiftly to his seat, and Polonius also pauses at the platform for his exchange with Hamlet. The Queen invites her son to take the stool to her right. His response is to rise, cross to her and turn upstage to the seated Ophelia, where he sits on the ground, reclining his head in her lap.

The prompt book gives a full account of the movements in The Dumb Show (reproduced in Appendix J). The lay-out indicates a careful synchronisation of events on the platform with those in the court. The intention is clear: the audience has not settled down to the performance, Claudius in particular being distracted by conversations with Ophelia and the Queen and by the serving of drinks. Hamlet, impatient for the King's attention, places himself behind the throne until Claudius is finally engaged by the Mime; Hamlet watches him closely. The King has obviously given nothing away, so that Hamlet tries a more direct provocation by stretching himself full-length on the floor, propped up against the stage and staring intently at Claudius. The King is alerted and as The Dumb Show finishes both he and Hamlet prolong their applause beyond that of the rest of the court, engaging in what the prompt book terms "a clapping duel"; Claudius wins and battle has been joined. Robert Speaight, who saw the production later in the season, observed:

> "It was not clear at first whether Mr Hardwicke was going to see the Dumb Show, but Mr Wood had here

> chosen Mr Barker's reading in preference to Dover Wilson's; as Mr Barker put it, Claudius could stand the extraction of one tooth but not two."[17]

In the break which follows The Dumb Show, a player fetches a small property "bush" and places it on the up right corner of the platform, while another takes the Player Queen's mask and a third brings in a stool and candle, the stool being set by the proscenium arch down left and the candle used as a light for the prompter. Hamlet leans towards Ophelia and slips a ring from her finger as he talks of "the posy of a ring" (line 150) and with a gesture recalling his treatment of her in the Nunnery Scene, throws it to a player. The same player goes to take up a position on the stool down left to act as prompter. The Player King, who has been pouring over a piece of script, which we can presume to be the dozen or sixteen lines inserted by Hamlet, now hands the script to the prompter and is ready to begin. Wood wishes us to identify this insertion as beginning at line 176b, the moment when the Player Queen breaks in with "O confound the rest!", for he has the prompter transfer his attention to "the special script" (so termed by the prompt book) at this point. The effect is underlined by the Player Queen moving in to behind the Player King's left shoulder to deliver the vital couplet:

> "In second husband let me be accurst
> None wed the second but who killed the first"
>
> (lines 178-179)

The cutting in the Player King's speech which follows enables the point to be quickly reinforced with his own lines:

> "So think thou wilt no second husband wed,
> But die thy thoughts when thy first Lord is dead."
>
> (lines 213-214)

The Player Queen finally steps forward to address the next speech directly at Gertrude and Claudius, kneeling to deliver the last couplet:

> "Both here and hence pursue me lasting strife
> If once a widow ever I be wife."
>
> (lines 221-222)

The Player King kneels at her side, preparing for sleep. He stretches himself out, head downstage, and the Player Queen "exits" behind the masking. Lucianus prepares himself for his entrance, but Hamlet's interruption sends him back down left to chat to the prompter while he waits for the action to resume. Claudius's question: "have you heard the argument? is there no offence in't?" is addressed to Polonius, who closes in towards him. Not only does the question produce a deceptively innocent answer from Hamlet, but also causes a flurry in the Players' prompt corner. The prompter beckons on two other players who hold a hasty conference, but before they can reach any conclusion, the court is ready to hear the rest of the play. The two players are dismissed and the prompter resumes his seat. The orchestra, which has begun playing while Hamlet explains the point of The Mouse-trap, continues to play throughout Lucianus's speeches, breaking off at the end of line 259. The following line is spoken unaccompanied:

> "On wholesome life usurp immediately"

On the last word the orchestra comes in again to back the action of pouring poison into the Player King's ear. He writhes and dies and Lucianus removes his crown. There is a pause as Hamlet forces the point home:

> "You shall see anon how the murderer gets the love
> of Gonzago's wife."
>
> (lines 263-264)

The King rises slowly and crosses down left. The court rises in fearful anticipation and the Players scatter upstage. The Queen moves in towards him, followed by Polonius, who stops the proceedings. The King's cry, "Give me some light - away!" is a signal for the chandelier to descend. Torches are plucked from it by attendants who follow the fleeing King. The props are quickly cleared from the platform and the court and players disperse. Hamlet and Horatio are left alone.

Hamlet lies on the platform reciting his rhyme, "Why let the stricken deer go weep". As he concludes, he rises and moves over to the King's chair, stabbing at it with his dagger. The players return as Hamlet calls for the recorders and begin dismantling the stage and the chandelier. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern drift in unnoticed, but as Hamlet announces "my wit's diseased" (line 323) they close in on him as if anticipating his flight. They are never far away from him throughout the rest of the scene and Hamlet's "Leave me friends" now takes on the significance of ridding himself of their too close attention. He embraces Horatio and indicates that he should leave in a different direction.

In preparation for the Prayer Scene, the Ely and Apostles' arches are flown out and replaced by a draped arch right centre. The free-standing pillar remains up left and a door which is set in the pillar is opened to reveal a statue of the Virgin and Child; the picture of a King kneeling in adoration is painted on the door's face. A prayer mat is placed at the foot of the pillar. Robert Speaight commented:

> "The placing of Claudius's soliloquy under a statue of the virgin and child emphasised the poignancy of "soft as sinews of the new-born babe" and here Mr Hardwick's performance achieved pathos as well as power."[18]

Hamlet enters up left and remains at the edge of the arras, watching the kneeling King. The first two and a half lines of his speech are delivered from this position before he moves quickly in and, drawing his dagger, makes to stab Claudius. The critic of The New Statesman saw this as "one of the most decisive and violent moments of the evening" (21 April 1961). Wood has chosen not to follow the business of Hamlet discovering Claudius's sword, as Byam Shaw in 1958 and Benthall in 1948 had done, though in having Hamlet use a dagger he presumably had to resort to poetic licence to accommodate line 88, "Up sword, and know thou a more horrid hent".

The pillar and draped arch are flown out to be replaced by a different arch, similarly draped, left centre. An ornate four poster bed, whose downstage posts are carved with the figure of a half-naked woman, is set up right. The bed is draped on the upstage side, and this will subsequently be used as the arras. A free-standing candelabra is placed up centre. A lady-in-waiting enters with a dress for the Queen and lays it on the bed. A second lady follows with a stool, which she places centre stage. Gertrude appears, accompanied by a third lady-in-waiting and is led to sit on the stool. Polonius enters and claps his hands to dismiss the ladies-in-waiting. Polonius concealed, the Queen moves away, brushing her hair in feigned unconcern as Hamlet appears. She turns to face him with the question "Have you forgot me?" and, rising, attempts to leave, but Hamlet prevents her, forcing her to sit once more. The Queen has been using a hand-mirror, and as Hamlet tells her:

> "You go not till I set you up a glass
> where you may see the inmost part of you"

he wrests it from her and hurls it offstage. The Queen moves quickly

upstage as she cries for help and the response from Polonius causes Hamlet to leap onto the bed and stab through the drapes at the back. Polonius falls onto the bed, the drape collapsing with him, and Hamlet is left to disentangle the folds in order to discover the identity of his victim. Bamber Gascoigne noted a piece of business which entailed a few coins rolling from the pocket of the dead Polonius; these subsequently provided Hamlet with the portraits of his father and stepfather.[19] The prompt book carries no mention of such business but records the more usual solution of medallions which Hamlet and the Queen wear each about their neck. It is possible that the business with the coins came at a late stage in rehearsal and was not, therefore, included in the prompt book.

Hamlet drags the Queen down onto the stool, where she remains until she begs her son: "speak no more" (line 88) at which point she breaks away from him down left. Hamlet pursues her to force his point home. The rising tempo of the scene reaches a climax just before the entrance of the Ghost, as Hamlet uncontrollably swings Gertrude round with such force that she falls below the bed. Hamlet sinks to his knees as the Ghost appears up centre and moves in to centre stage. Lights dim and music plays throughout the time the Ghost remains onstage. T.C. Worsley felt that the impact of this moment was not improved by "mother and son ... sprawled in that ungainly way on the floor with the Ghost in the background".[20]

Hamlet takes hold of Gertrude in desperation as he repeats "Ecstasy!" They remain kneeling until Hamlet asks that she go no more to his uncle's bed. As the Queen gives her promise to keep silence, they kiss. Bamber Gascoigne wrote in some exasperation of the incestuous undertones:

> "How much longer must we see Hamlet go on passionately kissing his mother on the lips in the closet scene. This has always been the extreme example of a director wearing his interpretation on his sleeve. Translate it back to Jacobean theatre with a boy playing Gertrude and you will see the full wrong-headedness of it."[21]

The critics were no kinder on Bannen for the seemingly inconsequential ending to the scene, where Hamlet removed the corpse, whistling as he left the stage. As though to aggravate the issue, Wood brings back Hamlet with the body of Polonius slung over his shoulder. The Queen having retired to the area of the bed, which is trucked out, we see Hamlet, with the body enter briefly down left and pass across the corner of the stage. His appearance also conveys a passage of time which is helpful to the re-shaped Act IV Scene 1 to follow. Gertrude being cut from this scene, Claudius must now have had opportunity to learn of Hamlet's murdering Polonius before giving orders to seek him out.

The stage is cleared of drapes and set with the Ely Arch right centre and the New Arch (so termed by the prompt book) which consists of three slender grouped pillars with a short arch to the right and the suggestion of an arch to the left. This is positioned up left and the apostles' pillar is again located up centre. Hamlet enters from down left where we have seen him take out the body and moves in to centre stage. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern enter from the right pit steps and, his attention thus diverted, Hamlet is suddenly attacked from the rear by a soldier appearing from behind the Ely Arch. He throws off the soldier and takes up his sword. Four more soldiers appear at various entrances and close in on him. "Hide fox and all after" (line 129) is a signal for Hamlet to knock Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's swords up in the air in an attempt

to break out of the circle. A general struggle ensues and Hamlet is finally overcome and disarmed.

Act IV Scene 3 runs on without break or change of location. Thus Hamlet is presented to the King with no intervening chase and capture off-stage. The soldiers fall back as the King enters. A group is despatched to seek the body and Hamlet is escorted off by the remaining soldiers. The cutting of the "convocation of politic worms" section (lines 20-30), removes much of the verbal duelling between Hamlet and Claudius and the scene retains little more than its function of moving the plot along. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are sent to prepare for the voyage to England and the King, moving down centre, delivers his last eleven lines on Hamlet's fate in the gathering gloom as the lights fade to a blackout.

The stage is cleared of pillars, reverting to the same stage picture which was used to open the play. The lights go up on Act IV Scene 4 to discover two soldiers poring over a map. Fortinbras enters with four more soldiers. They pause momentarily centre stage and move out the way they came. Hamlet enters accompanied by Rosencrantz and Guildenstern and four Danish soldiers. He moves in, closely followed by Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, and kneels with the captain beside the map spread out on the ground. Hamlet continues to be closely shadowed and his guards move only as far as the back of the stage when Hamlet bids them "go a little before". The soliloquy is delivered down right and as Hamlet nears the end, they move purposefully forward; they have delayed long enough. Bannen's handling of the speech was well received. He was felt to be more successful with those soliloquies which could be argued through to a conclusion and his phrasing here helped to dispel the feeling that he was performing set speeches whose words came too easily, ("a pause

on the word eggshell ... showed the words were growing in the mind"[22]). The soliloquy completed, Hamlet moves between Rosencrantz and Guildenstern and spreads his cloak about them as they walk upstage together. The blackout brings the second part of the play to an end.

The scene reverts to the court, with the Ely arch, the New arch and the Apostles' column in position. A new column is added for this scene and placed centre stage. It is tall and thin, with writhing shapes at is base and assymetrical, fluted columns rising to a tangle of arches. Leslie Hurry's design would seem to be reflecting Ophelia's tortured mind.

Ophelia is discovered centre stage holding a candle. The Queen, who enters with two ladies-in-waiting, moves down to her, the ladies remaining at the entrance. Ophelia wanders down left singing, where she encounters the King, who moves first to his wife, then back to Ophelia. She shies away from him and blows out the candle she is carrying ("I'll make an end on't" (line 56)). She accompanies the song which follows with a dance, which takes her full circle round the stage until she collapses. As she speaks of her brother, she stands and makes for the King. "Come, my coach!" takes her upstage of the Ely Arch and on to exit up left, pursued by the two ladies-in-waiting.

Claudius moves in behind his wife and embraces her, arms about her neck. Gertrude disengages herself as Hamlet is mentioned in the catalogue of sorrows, mindful perhaps of the promise she made to him concerning her relationship with Claudius. The King restlessly paces the stage. A tolling bell signalling the Laertes rebellion interrupts his thoughts. An attendant enters from the right pit

steps, quickly followed by Laertes and his henchman. Laertes disarms the King's attendant and the henchman forces him back down the pit steps, leaving Laertes to confront the undefended King. He advances on Claudius, but Gertrude steps in between them. Laertes makes a second attempt, sword drawn. The King closes with Laertes and forces his sword-point away. Pursued by Laertes, he breaks up left, where they encounter Ophelia. She moves unconcernedly downstage, humming snatches of song, to sit centre stage. The mood changes and Laertes kneels at her side as he murmurs "O rose of May". Ophelia tears flowers from her dress to distribute to the assembled company and an attempt by Laertes to comfort her is brushed aside. She breaks free and carries on handing out her flowers, returning, however, to Laertes who this time flings his arms around her waist from his kneeling position. Her last song concluded, she runs to exit up left and Laertes falls to the ground. The King goes to comfort him, leading him reluctantly away followed by the Queen.

Following the short letter scene, Laertes enters with the King, who is talking persuasively to him. With the transposition of the plotting scene, the Queen now enters to deliver news of Ophelia's death. The effect, coming so soon on his witnessing her madness overwhelms Laertes who leaves quickly. Claudius, embracing Gertrude, leads her away to follow him.

The two arches and the central column are struck, leaving only the Apostles' column up centre. A large sarcophagus with ornate canopy is place up right and a smaller one (without canopy) up left. The decision to play the burial scene and the transposed plotting scene which follows in a vault enabled Leslie Hurry to work with another interior rather than having to cope with the graveyard.

The possibility of flying the pillars and arches would undoubtedly have made this an easier job than James Bailey faced in 1948, where the ropes of leaves suspended between the permanent pillars were at best an unsightly compromise. Robert Speaight approved of the decision:

> "The whole of this scene ... had a somber El Grecoesque magnificence and the placing of the scene between the King and Laertes in that setting of royal tombs shows us to what practical uses Mr Hurry's genius for theatrical atmosphere can be put."[23]

The lights go up to discover the First Gravedigger already in the grave, which is located down left centre. The Second Gravedigger arrives pushing a wheelbarrow, which he proceeds to unload. He lays planks across the grave and squats on them offering a bottle to the first gravedigger. The account of the man going to the water (lines 15-20) is copiously illustrated by elaborate hand mime. A spade is handed into the grave from the wheelbarrow, but work is slow to begin and the riddling continues, accompanied by a slapstick routine. The second gravedigger is standing on the planks and as his companion slaps his legs in approval of an answer ("The gallows-maker"), he jumps up excitedly and falls into the grave. The First Gravedigger, who has turned to take a second swig from the bottle, looks round amazed to find him gone. A head slowly appears between the planks and the Second Gravedigger sheepishly scrambles out. He finally leaves in search of further refreshment, carrying a bucket of sand and a couple of skulls. The First Gravedigger turns to his task.

Hamlet and Horatio entering up right see the gravedigger at work and halt above the grave. Hamlet moves to sit on the wheelbarrow as he realises this is to be no brief conversation. He rises to take Yorick's skull and striding across the planks, moves down-

stage; Horatio follows him. The Gravedigger has busied himself rearranging the planks, and Hamlet, overcome by the smell of the skull, throws it back to him. A tolling bell warns of the approaching funeral procession and Hamlet and Horatio break right. The Second Gravedigger returns to help load the wheelbarrow and while his companion wheels it away to the down left corner he lays ropes over the planks. Hamlet and Horatio ease themselves down right while the procession moves in, breaking subsequently behind the tomb to watch the proceedings (see Ground Plot of Scene 15, Appendix K).

Laertes crosses to the Priest to ask "What ceremony else?", returning in due course above the grave. At a command from Laertes, the planks are removed by the gravediggers, who withdraw while soldiers move in to lower the coffin and remove the ropes. These are disposed of behind the down left proscenium arch. Laertes kneels at the graveside as he curses Hamlet and leaps into the grave. Hamlet's cry causes a general disturbance and a passage opens through the crowd as he comes quickly down to the graveside. He leaps in, and in the ensuing struggle Laertes grips him by the throat. Horatio and two attendants drag Hamlet from the grave and hold him struggling at the right-hand side, while Laertes is similarly restrained at the left. Hamlet shakes himself free to kneel and profess his love for Ophelia. Hamlet rises as he challenges Laertes "What wilt thou do for her?" and Horatio again tries to hold him back at the Queen's request. Hamlet finally exits and Horatio and Gertrude are dispatched to follow him. The First Gravedigger brings in the coffin lid from behind the down right proscenium arch and the second Gravedigger jumps into the grave to fasten it down. They replace the flagstones above the grave trap, helped by the soldiers. The King and Laertes are left alone. The King crosses to above the

tomb situated up right, while the still sorrowing Laertes goes to kneel at the freshly covered grave. It is this mood which the King must now turn to revenge.

Claudius moves in towards Laertes, who remains kneeling until the King provokes him with "Laertes, was your father dear to you?". He rises and the King moves in closer, breaking only when he begins to rehearse the details of the plot. Without the appearance of the Queen, "Our purpose may hold there ..." (Act IV Scene 7 line 161) is a rather abrupt ending to the scene. They leave together.

Opening Act V Scene 2 at line 56 ("So Rosencrantz and Guildenstern go to't") gives the audience an impression of overhearing the tail-end of the account of the English venture. As Hamlet and Horatio move in, they are quickly joined by Osric. Gordon Gostelow doubles Osric with the Ghost.

The final court scene is played against a background of the Apostles' column, the Mad Scene column and the New arch. Attendants bring on thrones, which are placed left centre, and a table up right centre. Laertes is first to appear from the right pit entrance. He crosses the stage, to take up a position down left. The King leads in the Queen to sit in the downstage throne and moves centre stage himself, drawing the two contestants to him. They withdraw to their respective stations, Hamlet to the right where Horatio awaits him and Laertes to the left. Osric crosses first to Laertes offering the foils and duelling daggers. Two attendants bring in a pitcher of wine and goblets, which are placed on the table until called for by the King, and the first bout gets underway. John Barton's arrangement of the duel was highly praised, as much for its ability to create atmosphere as for its technical brilliance: "The fight was thrillingly managed, with the unenvenomed rapier rolling along

the floor to Laertes in a deathly hush."[24]

The end of the first bout sees the combatants retiring to their respective sides of the stage, while a servant brings the wine to the King. Following the second bout, Hamlet retires centre stage, where the Queen crosses to offer him the napkin before moving to the table. She drinks from the poisoned goblet. The King moves swiftly down to Laertes as Gertrude returns to wipe Hamlet's face. The King moves back to his throne, the Queen to the table. The end of the third bout finds Hamlet wandering down centre with Laertes upstage of him. From this position of vantage, Laertes attacks the unprepared Hamlet. He spins round and the fighting begins in earnest. Hamlet disarms Laertes and picks up his rapier. He wounds Laertes, who falls down left, while he himself retires right. Osric goes to attend Laertes. The dying Queen moves downstage where the King meets her. As she warns of the drink, the King kisses her lips to prevent her saying more. He leads her to the throne before returning centre; Hamlet closes in on the King. He forces him back against the table, where he kills him,and, taking the poisoned cup from the table thrusts it to the King's lips. Claudius pitches forward and finally dies down right. Laertes drags himself to his feet and crosses to Hamlet to exchange forgiveness before dying upstage of the King. Hamlet moves centre stage for his final words. An attendant enters and hands a paper to Osric,who announces the arrival of Fortinbras. Hamlet dies and the kneeling Horatio mourns his death. Music, which begins at this point, accompanies the final moments of the play.

Horatio rises as Fortinbras enters. At Fortinbras's command, the soldiers move forward and lower their spears to form a bed for the body of the dead Prince. Four soldiers raise the body onto the

spears and the procession moves slowly upstage as the lights fade to blackout. A maroon explodes, signalling the end of the play. Robert Speaight observed the closing moments of the play with mixed feelings:

> "Perhaps Mr Bannen's final speeches were needlessly hurried; Stratford seems rather frightened of the "dying fall". But the slow carrying of the body upstage on the lowered spears brought this embassy of death to an appropriate and implacable close."[25]

The general reaction to this first Hamlet of the new era was undoubtedly one of disappointment. Peter Hall had much work still to do in preparing audiences at Stratford for the changing styles of production and performance. It may be argued that Ian Bannen provided too radical a change both in concept and execution so early in the re-education of an audience nurtured on the star-system. Many of the critics lashed out: "a psychopathic barrow boy"; "a born Horatio"; "parody Edmund Kean". The more circumspect remembered that they had sometimes been made to eat their words and reacted with caution.

Harold Hobson:

> "Ian Bannen is the second dark Hamlet of our generation. The first was Sir Alec Guiness. In condemning Guiness contemporary criticism made a major error. The memory of this curbs the exuberance with which one says that Mr Bannen's performance is disappointing."

Treading thus warily, he goes on to analyse what he recognises as an attempt to break new ground in playing Shakespeare:

> "The mellifluous approach to Shakespeare is as dead as the ranting one; it is by gesture, bearing and new invention that Mr Bannen seeks to compass his ends. But these ancillary weapons put in the forefront of the armoury fail of their purpose."[26]

It seems likely that an over-emphasis on the method of playing at the expense of the meaning within the text caused much of the unfavourable criticism. Kenneth Tynan:

> "a timorous Hamlet is perfectly acceptable. But a slow-witted Hamlet is inconceivable ... he makes the prince a plodder, depressive and numb of brain and thus brings the play to an early standstill since its motive force derives entirely from the restless intellectual energy of its protagonist."[27]

On Sunday 7 May 1961, B.B.C. Television's Arts programme, Monitor, showed extracts from the production.[28] Interviewed by Huw Wheldon, Bannen said in his own defence that the performance on the first night was tired and strained. It would change and go on changing.

It may be that the production did not go far enough in accommodating a new and different kind of talent, leaving the central actor, at odds with his surroundings, to bear the brunt of the criticism. It was certainly found to lack unity and depth. Peter Wood's direction produced conflicting reactions. He was variously seen to be adept at handling the big effects at the expense of the detail and as enlivening the duller scenes at the expense of the good ones.

In such an uneven production it was difficult for the cast to emerge with the credit their individual talents may well have deserved. When the critic of The Times praised Geraldine McEwan's performance as the best thing on view, it was more an indictment of the production than outright enthusiasm for the actress. Noel Willman's Claudius ("an executive smoothie, a takeover king"[29]) had a bad press, though his successor, Paul Hardwicke was generally well liked. Elizabeth Sellars as Gertrude wrestled with the same problem as Googie Withers before her, the reconciliation of her roles as Hamlet's mother and Claudius's wife. It was generally felt that she was too young to be totally convincing, especially in comparison with a more than usually aged first husband. Redmond Phillips's Polonius was seen as a sad return to the foolish old man, ponderous without wit.

The general picture which emerges from the production suggests

the lack of a consistent method of moulding the performances. The house style which Peter Hall was pledged to produce had not yet appeared. Perhaps the production exhibited an inevitable breaking-down process before the rebuilding that Hall was hoping for could begin. The signs of change were there: in the playing of the central role, in Leslie Hurry's set design, in Alan Rawsthorne's musical score. What seemed to be lacking was the right hand to orchestrate the new effects. Kenneth Tynan identified the problem:

> "The English theatre has plenty of classical actors: what it needs is a few more classical directors. Apart from Tyrone Guthrie and Peter Brook, the front rank is unoccupied."[30]

In the eventful four years before the 1965 production of Hamlet, Peter Hall will have laid claim to join that front rank.

Hamlet

1965, 1966

Director: Peter Hall

Hamlet: David Warner

CHAPTER 5

A Hamlet for the Sixties

By 1965, Peter Hall had established himself at the head of The Royal Shakespeare Company and at the same time had gained a considerable reputation as a director. The 1963 productions of The Wars of the Roses - the three parts of Henry VI and Richard III adapted to form three plays - had been widely acclaimed. In the Quartercentenary year, 1964, they were repeated as the nucleus of a cycle of Shakespeare's history plays from Richard II to Richard III. It was a considerable achievement and, in addition to enhancing The Royal Shakespeare Company's reputation, it served to establish Hall as a major director.

Hall's 1965 production of Hamlet owed much to this two year involvement with the histories. His preoccupation with political structures saw him propounding a view of Hamlet which emphasised court intrigue, political manipulation and the 1960s preoccupation with "the establishment". Set against this background was a young Hamlet who mirrored the youth of the day. Hall declared his hand:

> "for our decade ... the play will be about the problems of commitment in life and politics."[1]

He was concerned to bring into focus the apathy of the young, induced by political and moral disaffection. Hamlet, faced by a rotten state, is asked to commit himself to a system he cannot trust and to relationships he finds to be tarnished. Hall's views on the play had been well publicised and in a talk to the company when rehearsals began, he discussed the characters of Claudius and Polonius in a wider context:

> "Hamlet sees through both men. He sees that as politicians they have to lie and cheat. And Hamlet refuses this. The young must feel this about their rulers even when there is no crime in question. They must believe that the millenium could come tomorrow if power were in the right hands."[2]

Hall saw Hamlet's inability to act as stemming from a "disease of disillusionment". He talked much of commitment, in Hamlet's thoughts as well as in actions, and drew parallels with the apathetic youth of the sixties. He accused them of "losing the ordinary, predictable radical impulses the young of all ages have had"; he questioned their commitment to their own preoccupations: nuclear disarmament, free love and drugs, concluding:

> "There is a sense of what-the-hell-anyway, over us looms the mushroom cloud. And politics are a game and a lie, whether in our own country or in the East West dialogue, which goes on interminably without anything very much being said ... So perhaps the Hamlet of the 1960s, crucified by his terrible responsibilities, may make us feel something of this apathy, this refusal of commitment."[3]

It was hardly surprising that this production appealed to the young and that its Hamlet, David Warner, became something of a cult figure with his own generation - he was twenty four when he played the part. Hall conceded that the play remained a Renaissance piece, which might hamper complete identification with the 1960s, "But it can and must speak directly to our experience of living."

In 1964, Jan Kott had published Shakespeare Our Contemporary, which appeared in England the following year. It was an influential work in the theatre (its thesis is summarised in its title) and it is possible to detect echoes of Kott's thinking in Peter Hall's ideas. In the chapter 'Hamlet of the Mid-Century', Kott writes:

> "through Shakespeare's text we ought to get at our own modern experience, anxiety and sensibility."[4]

Later, in an article for The Sunday Times, Kott reflected on the ways in which Peter Hall had sought to do this in his production of Hamlet. He acknowledges, as Hall had done by implication, the problem that a modern audience will have with the prince and suggests that the actor must ask himself: "What is the contemporary emotional equivalent?"

Kott had found a parallel in Post-Graduate students at Cambridge:

> "They are not the sons of kings but they are conscious of being inheritors of the world's problems ... it was amazing ... to see those boys, so tall, not at all fine, liking to sit on the floor wearing clothes too big for them, always determined to be informal."
>
> (31 August 1965).

It is an illuminating comment on David Warner's gangling, anti-romantic prince, dressed in shabby student gown and long scarf. Kott went on to compare Hall's view of the ruling class of Denmark with a totalitarian state. Kosintsev's film of Hamlet was released during this same period and Kott suggests another possible influence on Hall's production:

> "I think that he has perhaps learned from the Russian school - that emphasis on the continual presence of other people, for instance, which Kosintsev pointed up in the latest Russian film Hamlet."
>
> (31 August 1965).

Peter Hall acknowledged Kott's view of Hamlet as "committed only in what he does, not in what he thinks" and developed it in his own terms: "For Hamlet action is irrevocable: but he demands a world of no action, in which thought is free, ambiguous, unlimited by happenings."[5] Hall will use this idea to direct Warner in his exploration of the soliloquies.

In his talk to the company, Hall also examined other critics' views of the play (the programme will contain extracts from the writings of twenty-five critics). He has reservations about Brecht's "ironic ability to look at the play unsentimentally". Brecht's view is extreme and for Hall: "To see Hamlet as Brecht did as a purely political experience about feuding kings killing one another is not to me Shakespearian". Hall will, nonetheless, go on to emphasise the political structures within the play. He finds himself in tune with Frank Kermode's view of Shakespeare's "fertilising pessimism" as it affects Hamlet, which Hall sees as "the darkest and most penetrating statement of the human condition". But it is to Granville-Barker that

he turns for a view of the play which accords most closely with his own: "a man adrift from old faiths and not yet anchored in new."[6] This becomes the touchstone for his own assessment of Hamlet:

> "I believe that Hamlet is trembling on the point of full maturity ... He has in him the possibility of all virtues and all vices, but at this crucial point in his development he is tried by an extreme crisis ... crucified by an experience so complex that it leads to a profound disillusionment and finally a terrible fatalism."[7]

Hall chose David Warner as his Hamlet. A young Midlands actor (at twenty four the youngest Hamlet since Alec Guiness in 1938), Warner was in his third season with The Royal Shakespeare Company. With a background of repertory in Coventry and David Rudkin's Afore Night Come at The Arts Theatre in London, he had been brought to Stratford by Peter Hall and, with little experience of playing Shakespeare, had been cast in the role of Henry VI. His performance had been widely acclaimed, though a less successful Richard II was to follow. The critics were suspicious of a Svengali-like relationship between Warner and Hall, which pre-production press interviews with Warner did little to dispel. He was loth to commit himself on his views of Hamlet, indeed seemed perversely without views, placing himself confidently in his director's hands. Hall was more forthcoming on what he was looking for:

> "Warner is conspicuously a modern young man and has an irony and intellectual toughness well removed from his Henry VI."[8]

He had not, however, had time to establish his full range as a Shakespearian actor and his Henry VI remained a point of reference:

> "Essentially what Mr Warner presents is yet another variant on his Henry VI - a sweet-natured child entrusted with a task beyond his powers."[9]

Warner also had to contend, as Bannen had in 1961, with a resistance to any radical re-thinking of a role which carries with it more

PLATE XII

Peter Hall and David Warner in rehearsal.

preconceptions than most. Harold Hobson, perhaps with the wisdom of hindsight, acknowledged the problem in reviewing the production when it transferred to The Aldwych in December 1965:

> "We who have seen Gielgud are not much interested in Hamlets who are the glass of fashion and the mould of form: nothing is as high as Everest. Some other aspect of aristocracy has to be explored ... David Warner chooses unconventionality and makes it fresh and exciting."[10]

Earlier in the year at its Stratford opening, there had been a predictable outcry against his clothes, his gait, his demeanour and his verse-speaking. This Hamlet was temperamentally neurotic rather than being driven to become so. Existentialist, absurd, nail-biting, probably a coward, he embodied the worst of the coffee-bar generation, and the image of the self-preoccupied undergraduate was guaranteed to test the patience of the older generation. J.C. Trewin's review for The Birmingham Post was restrained but representative:

> "Mr Warner is tall and frail; yet he seems in retrospect to be a small Hamlet. There is little in him to suggest the ideal prince that Ophelia had loved. He is indeed thoroughly anti-romantic, gauche, a little gangling: now and then he can look surprisingly owlish. His voice too can fray into monotony. It seems to be gravel-based and have an odd, harsh nasality."
>
> (20 August 1965)

There was, however, a body of critics who saw this youthful Hamlet in a different light. This was a prince young enough to be a student, learning as he went along and giving the impression of living each scene for the first time. His unconventional garb and manner were signs of credible aristocratic indifference, for, as Harold Hobson pointed out, it is Ophelia who dubs him "the glass of fashion and the mould of form, but only the very naive would accept as objective reporting a girl's description of her prospective fiance."[11] Ronald Bryden felt that Hamlet's youthfulness was being used as a recognisable

escape route from responsibility, to be assumed, rather like the madness, when the occasion demanded:

> "His disguise is not just disshevelment but the wilful untidiness of an undergraduate, the half-baked impertinence of the adolescent who would test his parents' love to the limit of tolerance ... The easiest disguise for an adolescent with a problem too big for him is that of a problem adolescent ... The image may have been Hall's but clearly it shaped itself around the peculiar talents of David Warner."[12]

The same critic was prepared to be tolerant about the delivery of the lines which had made for a long and, many thought, laboured first-night performance. He recognised that Hall's radical re-thinking of the play necessitated new emphases within the text and that these needed the ease of familiarity before the production ran smoothly.

Peter Hall had evolved a working relationship with David Warner dating from The Wars of the Roses. His contact with John Bury had developed along similar lines. Bury had begun his career as a stage designer almost by accident with Joan Littlewood's Theatre Workshop, where he had stayed for twenty years. During this time he had developed a non-decorative approach to stage design. From necessity, sets often had to be constructed of real raw materials - a wooden door, a corrugated iron fence - and he had developed a sense of the importance of texture in his designs. This had been apparent in his sets for Henry IV part 2 in 1964, which show the same massiveness of structure and use of textured materials - on this occasion metal - which characterised his designs for Hamlet. He is a man who prefers to work from the director's requirements; his imagination, he feels, needs a catalyst. He formed a fruitful working relationship with Peter Hall, who subsequently made him Head of the theatre's design team. Bury's settings for Hamlet were in marked contrast to previous productions of the play at Stratford:

PLATE XIII

Photograph of John Bury's setting, taken during performance by the stage electrician. Two of the movable panels present their stone facings, while the others show memorial tablets. The central doors are folded back to reveal a grave, with iron surround and monument.

> "This Elsinore is not a dream castle honeycombed with Gothic corridors, but a busy centre of government and social glitter opulently reflected in the tapestries and marble floors of John Bury's set."[13]

He had tried to reflect in the cold black formica the enclosed world and stifling politics of Elsinore, allowing with the movable panels for the changes of location and varying themes of the play. Thus, Ronald Bryden was able to observe: the "throne room swarms with faded frescoes of sad grey Rubens flesh like a wax museum of elderly lasciviousness."[14]

The stage was framed by a false, black proscenium arch which concealed the downstage entrances. Running from downstage to up centre were two massive walls, reminiscent of the 1964 production of The Wars of the Roses, which were separated up centre by huge, studded doors, one containing a wicket gate. Within each wall two cube-shaped structures were set, which could be turned to present a different panel face. Thus the stone facing which backed the opening scene would later give way to geometric designs, bookshelves, frescoes of naked figures and gravestones. These panels were used in a variety of combinations and the production records include explanatory diagrams and Panel Cues (a sample of which is included in appendix L). The rear doors could be folded back out of sight and the space used to complement the panels: a broken column on a disintegrating grave backed Ophelia's burial scene; a tapestry with huge figures of horses the first court scene. The stage floor was part of the overall design (as it had been in The Wars of the Roses). The patterned black and white squares with a central white circle simulated solid marble and enhanced the massiveness of the set. It presented something of a problem in the Fortinbras scene, and in the graveyard scene an attempt to add a little reality was made by surrounding the grave-trap

with mounds of earth. Apart from these two scenes, where most designers encounter difficulties, the set made a favourable impact and Robert Speaight felt that:

> "The production, owing much to Mr John Bury's saturnine imagination, had space and scale and splendor, but the splendor was not obtrusively baroque."[15]

Ann Curtis's costume designs reflected a combination of historical periods which recalled the play's origin and its interpretative associations: "although the line was Tudor, the 'image' was Victorian political."[16] It is a method of costume design which has become characteristic of Royal Shakespeare Company productions.

Hamlet's "customary suits of solemn black" were adapted to project a student image. A faded scholar's gown, belted at the waist, was worn over white shirt with thin bootlace tie, dark trousers and knee boots. A long red scarf was wound in a single loop about his neck (this was later omitted).

Claudius wore a long, belted waistcoat in a pin-stripe material, worn beneath a calf-length black gown with puffed sleeves and a large velvet collar surmounted by a chain of office, also in the shape of a collar, with a spiked medallion. For the prayer scene he wears a silk dressing gown over shirt and breeches. Polonius's costume is similar in style. A broad pin-stripe waistcoat is worn under a black gown with light facings, a tight-fitting cap which reaches the ears and a badge of office attached to a 'V' shaped collar. The use of pin-stripe in the two costumes produces an effect calculated to suggest the establishment. Peter Thomson, reviewing the 1975 Studio production of Hamlet at The Other Place where a similar costume point was made, observed: "There is nothing more disheartening to one who knows the need for change than a group of reasonable men in pin-striped suits."

Gertrude wore a dress of silver grey brocade, heavily embroidered

with silver around the neckline. It was low-cut, with a high waist and tight-fitting sleeves with puffed inset. Jewelry was restricted to a single pendant stone on a thin chain, droplet earings and a simple coronet. Ophelia wore a severe dress in a hard, shiny material, high-waisted, with low-cut neckline filled in with circles of lace forming a high-standing collar, and a touch of lace at the sleeve. The wig is equally severe with swept-back hair piled nearly on top of the head. For the mad scenes the hair is released, and at this point the three actresses who played the part were differently dressed: Glenda Jackson in a black gown, Janet Suzman in a torn, embroidered shift and Estelle Kohler in a mud-bespattered underslip.

The Player King and Player Queen's costumes for the play scene are of special interest. In making them, John Bury used a process which he had developed during the history plays. Both garments are treated with "gunk", a crude rubber substance which is moulded onto the costumes to give them body and texture. The costumes are both similar in style: a long, calico gown with tight-fitting sleeves, with the addition of pendant cuffs for the Player Queen. Worn over these garments are long tabards, the Player King's having a more elaborate collar and hem. They also wore buskins, a high crown and a half-mask. These non-naturalistic figures rose above the surrounding court, producing an effect not unlike the towering, mechanical ghost.

The production opened on the 19 August 1965 and played for thirty four performances up to the end of the season, which finished on the 20 November. The demand for tickets in this period had been so great that the season was extended to the 11 December. Hamlet was then given twelve more performances. It transferred to The Aldwych, where it opened on the 22 December and played for twenty nine performances

until the end of the season, 12 February 1966. It was then brought back into the 1966 Stratford season and the 28 April 1966 saw its third opening night (the one hundredth since The Royal Shakespeare Company was formed) and it ran for a further sixty eight performances until the end of the season, 12 November. One hundred and forty three performances had been given in all.

The average running time at Stratford in 1965 was three hours fifteen minutes, at The Aldwych, three hours thirty one minutes and at Stratford in 1966, three hours twelve minutes. Initially one interval only was taken after Act IV Scene 4 - but when the production returned to Stratford in 1966, an additional five minute interval was introduced after Act I Scene 5.

The text used for the production was The Signet Classic Shakespeare, from which a total of 727 lines were cut, giving a playing version of 3,103 lines. Three prompt books exist, covering the production at Stratford in 1965, The Aldwych in 1965-66, and Stratford 1966. The 1965 prompt book is the most thorough and complete of the three. The Aldwych prompt book appears to be less carefully prepared. It is basically copied from the earlier one, but it is unlikely that some of the variations shown are intended; the cuts as they stand sometimes make little sense. Some are clearly attributable to the assembling of the prompt book: two pages of text are selotaped together, one above the other, in such a way as to prevent any cut being marked underneath the tape. Elsewhere, readings which have been preferred in the first prompt book are omitted, and although it is possible that the actor has reverted to the line as printed in the Signet edition, it seems more likely that this second book has not been meticulously kept. The Stratford 1966 prompt book shows fewer variations from the first and suggests a more workmanlike approach. There appear to be

omissions, but these are largely, though not always, due to the preparation of the prompt book. It does, however, presuppose the existence of the 1965 book in that it omits detailed moves and appears to have been prepared directly from it rather than from The Aldwych version. In general, there are no major reassessments of the text throughout the three stages of the production.

The cuts may be grouped into two categories: those which deal with staged action and those which elaborate points already made. Various cuts dealing with the appearance of the Ghost and characters' reactions to it fall into this first category, for example Act 1 Scene 2 lines 202b-206 and 215-220, which contain descriptions of the Ghost's first appearance. Such lines as:

"How now Horatio, you tremble and look pale"

(Act I Scene 1 line 53)

and Gertrude's descriptions of Hamlet's reaction to the Ghost (Act III Scene 4 lines 119-124a) save the actor the embarrassment of suiting his action to the word. Hall shows himself sensitive to the actor's needs. Thus Hamlet is allowed to dispense with:

"Io, here I lie,
Never to rise again."

(Act V Scene 2 lines 316-317)

and Laertes need not weep (Act IV Scene 7 lines 185b-188a)

Some elaborations which are cut give cause for regret: Hamlet's reflections on the nature of dreams with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern (Act II Scene 2 lines 260-272a) and Claudius's generalisations on the subject of mercy, prayer and the after-life in his soliloquy (Act III Scene 3 lines 46b-50a and 62b-64a). It is an uneviable task for a director to reconcile the demands of cutting with the audience's expectations in a well-known speech.

Certain scenes in the play offer greater opportunities for cutting, amongst them Laertes's Farewell (Act I Scene 3), the Reynaldo Scene (Act II Scene 1), sometimes omitted in its entirety, though not in this production, and the Closet Scene (Act III Scene 4). All of these scenes lose a good number of lines. In the first two scenes, Polonius's lines are heavily cut, usually those which elaborate a point. It was suggested that Hall's view of Polonius as a shrewd politician was helped by such manipulative cutting. Horatio faced the same accusation: by reducing the size of the part, Hamlet was made to appear more isolated. Horatio loses some seventy five lines in all, the most significant in this respect being Act I Scene 4 line 69-78 where he expresses concern for Hamlet's safety in following the Ghost. In Hall's defence, it must be said that Horatio is never completely cut from a scene and it may have been a rather subdued performance of the part which gave this impression. There may be more interpretative significance in the cutting of Hamlet's statement of his duty to kill Claudius:

> "and is't not to be damned,
> To let this canker of our nature come
> In further evil?"
>
> (Act V Scene 2 lines 68-70)

Hall has often stressed Hamlet's inability to commit himself to any conclusive action. Similarly, the image of a smooth, urbane Claudius may have been preserved by the omission of the Ghost's description of him as:

> "a wretch whose natural gifts were poor
> To those of mine."
>
> (Act I Scene 5 lines 51-52)

Conversely, one might argue that had Hall been guilty on any large scale of biased cutting such lines as Act I Scene 2 lines 94-106

("whose common theme is death of fathers") would have survived in a production which laid such stress on the Ghost.

It is also to be expected that with the emphasis on the political and military aspects of the play, no more than ten lines will be cut from Horatio's speech on the subject of the Norwegian wars (Act I Scene 1 lines 80-107). Claudius's speech in Act I Scene 2 loses only three lines of the twenty three which deal with the same subject and Cornelius and Voltimand are retained, the latter's twenty one line speech in Act II Scene 2 losing some four lines only. On the whole, Hall presents a fairly full text, and the cutting reflects the emphases of the production, though not with undue bias.[18]

The stage picture which confronted the assembling audience was dominated by a huge cannon centre stage - a symbol of war to establish the background against which the action would take place. The stone facings were in position on the wall panels, and the tall, studded rear doors firmly shut. The castle had the air of being garrisoned and secured against attack. The early moments establish the watches of the night. Francisco opens the play, striding to the centre of the stage where he pauses momentarily and then exits. He is quickly followed by Barnardo, who takes guard down centre. Francisco returns and the dialogue gets underway. A bell tolling twelve accompanies the opening of the play, though reference to it is cut in line 7. The patterns of movement weave about the cannon, which continues to be a reminder of the need for vigilance. The news that the soldiers have other reason to be on their guard is thus given a new impact when Marcellus mentions the Ghost. One critic felt that this martial emphasis had a direct bearing on the characters' reaction to the Ghost:

> "The Danish frontier guards, on extra watch because of the massing Norwegian troops, immediately assume that the Ghost of their dead warrior king has returned to warn them against the dangers of appeasement. They find it hard to believe that he brings a private and personal message to young Hamlet on a family matter."[19]

Hall had chosen to present a Ghost of super-human proportions (the press reported it as being anything from eight to twelve feet tall). The huge figure was mounted on a trolley, which houses the actor playing the Ghost, Patrick Magee, and a stage hand to propel it. It had a large, artificial head and movable arms; a long, flowing robe enveloped the whole structure. With aid of swirling mist, low lighting, a gliding movement and its massive size, it contrived to produce a sense of unreality which was overwhelming. Alan Brien describes "a giant Sicilian marionette, breathing smoke ... It is a courageous gimmick, risking and narrowly avoiding, an unintentional laugh."[20] Not everyone was able to take the sober view and Eric Shorter, describing in The Daily Telegraph in 1966 the variations in size it had undergone, observed:

> "Last year it was king-sized... Then it shrank to life-size for the London run ... Now the ghost is back at its huge old self ... So there you have it: the most elusive character in Shakespeare going up and down like Alice."
>
> (29 April 1966)

The form of the Ghost was in fact a major interpretative decision, emphasising the father-son relationship in the play. This was given an interesting, if unintentional, new twist when Brewster Mason took over the role at The Aldwych, doubling it with Claudius. The change did not meet with universal approval ("Mr Mason is a master of suavity; the sepulchral does not fall within his range."[21])

The Ghost's first entrance is startling. Horatio is seated on the ground, listening to Marcellus's account of the Ghost's appearances

when the rear doors are flung open and the figure of the Ghost moves in, raising its arms as it moves around the cannon. Horatio springs to his feet and retreats with the rest. Challenged, the Ghost disappears down right. The same technique of spreading alarm by bringing a seated character to his feet is used when the Ghost reappears. This time Marcellus leaps up as a second Ghost figure is moved in up left, and Horatio crosses behind the cannon to confront it. A blackout and the reintroduction of the first Ghost figure down right helps to bewilder the watchers and give point to lines 141-142:

"'Tis here!

'Tis here!

'Tis gone!"

At the conclusion of the scene the cannon is struck and the stage set for the first appearance of the Court. The rear doors are opened and secured out of view, revealing a tapestry, from which two giant horses, caparisoned for battle, stare down on the scene. The audience continues to be reminded of the danger without. The point is further made by the presence of five soldiers, with helmets, breastplates and halberds who mount guard. Two tables are set down right and left, with benches placed downstage of them so that the actors will face upstage. Two high-backed chairs are similarly placed right and left centre.

Hall decided on a novel and significant way of bringing in the central characters. The King, with the Queen seated to his right, Hamlet to his left and Polonius to his far left, is sitting in a high-backed chair behind a diamond-shaped table mounted on a platform. This is trucked in through the central upstage entrance to a position centre stage. The director was presumably seeking to effect what Robert Speaight called "the quiet, efficient functioning of public

life", though Stanley Wells found it "not without its ludicrous aspect."[22] Robert Speaight goes on to describe its impact:

> "The opening tableau ... with Hamlet imprisoned at the table was far more telling than the ostentatious solitude in which he is usually set apart. That table was the cage of circumstance in which he was caught up."[23]

He goes on to commend the director's decision to play the scene with the chief characters seated, interpreting this as a further statement on Hamlet's predicament: "an unsettled mind in a seemingly settled society."

Hall chose to use the opening of this scene to mount a ritualistic show of the full court. In addition to the five halberdiers, he brought on four counsellors, six secretaries and seven trumpeters and drummers. An attendant offered wine to the King and Polonius, who accepted, and to Hamlet and Gertrude, who refused. As the business of the scene gets underway, Claudius rises to deliver his formal tribute to the dead king. The puppet-like court rises too and sits when he sits (line 8); he then proceeds to turn his attentions to the Queen. It is quickly established that the King is firmly in control and the machine-like efficiency of his running of affairs is apparent. The court again takes its cue from the King and laughs obediently as he speaks almost dismissively of his brother ("So much for him" line 25); they murmur their assent when Claudius bids the world take note:

> "You are the most immediate to our throne" (line 109)

It quickly becomes clear that Hall's emphasis on the political aspects of the play will extend to other characters. His attitude to Polonius has been made clear in his talk to the company:

> "not a doddering old fool, but the kind of shrewd, tough, Establishment figure you can still meet in St James': a man who sends himself up, who uses his own silly humour as a weapon."[24]

Tony Church firmly establishes the character in this opening scene and will go on to use the humour in his exchanges with Hamlet to deadly

effect.

The court retires, leaving Hamlet sitting in his chair on the platform, where he remains for the first six lines of his soliloquy. "Fie on't ah fie" brings him to his feet and he moves downstage. Warner's handling of the soliloquies provoked a great deal of comment. An anti-Romantic prince, he took the initiative in making contact with his audience rather than relying on his innate power of attracting them. The soliloquies often became a request for help, an attempt to involve the audience in seeking a solution to his problems. Alan Brien was one critic who recognised what the director and the actor were trying to do and to identify its modern connotations:

> "Mr Hall's decision to have them [the soliloquies] spoken directly to the audience as at a public meeting ensures that we listen closely and attentively to the argument. They are appeals for our support and understanding and establish an intense rapport which is rarely obtained by more fluent and sonorous Hamlets. It creates an atmosphere almost like a teach-in."[25]

Warner's vocal technique also came under fire. He was criticised for his slow, monotonous delivery and for ignoring the music in the verse. Jan Kott answered these critics on Hall's behalf:

> "the whole experience of Hamlet today is anti-poetical, anti-rhetorical. It is right that the great soliloques should be given straight at the audience and in a non-rhetorical way and that this Hamlet should tend towards a black humour. It is not a question of cynicism, it is part of showing a new pattern, avoiding sentiment."[26]

The soliloquy over, Hamlet retreats to the counsellor's chair right centre. The mood of the ensuing scene, where Hamlet is told of the Ghost, was lacking in excitement and John Russell Brown complained of two specific instances where Warner was particularly flat:

> "This Hamlet shows no hope and almost no feeling on 'I will watch tonight'; his 'would the night were come' is petulant."[27]

In a lighter vein, it was pointed out that there now existed a

considerable discrepancy between Horatio's detailed description of the Ghost and the apparition which Hall had reincarnated. Horatio had omitted to add "that the old boy had doubled his height in the underworld".[28]

By the time the production returned to Stratford in 1966, it was being taken at a faster pace, though not without casualties, as Robert Speaight's comments on this scene indicate:

> "The pace is now excellent, and indeed in the second scene I thought it altogether too precipitate. Horatio's account of the Ghost's appearance was oddly unconcerned and Hamlet's reaction to it, like his first soliloquy, unduly rushed."[29]

At the end of the scene the rear doors are closed and the downstage left wall-panel is revolved to show a set of bookshelves. The court furniture is struck and replaced by a long table and two high-backed chairs placed diagonally centre stage. A silver tray, with decanter and two glasses, stands on the table, together with a black briefcase. After kissing Laertes, Ophelia collects the briefcase and gives it to her brother. Laertes makes no move to depart but goes instead to the bookshelf, where he takes out a book as if to give weight to his parting advice, and joins his sister, who is seated at the table. A feature of Hall's direction was his willingness to allow people to sit and talk. The two remain seated until Polonius's arrival causes them both to rise respectfully. He is accompanied by Reynaldo and carries a sheaf of papers, which he puts down on the table. Laertes crosses to kiss Polonius as he is urged not to delay his departure and Polonius delivers his blessing as a result of this show of filial affection. Polonius pours himself a drink from the decanter and sits at the table, where he remains to deliver his advice to his son, crossing to him to make the final point ("This above all, to thine own self be true", line 78). A parting kiss, and he returns to busy himself with the papers on the table. As Laertes and Reynaldo leave,

he moves to the bookshelves seemingly absorbed in his own thoughts as he looks for a book and returns to read it at the table. Preoccupied, he gave no impression of having overheard Laertes remind his sister of their confidences. Robert Speaight commended the subtlety of the business:

> "Where ninety nine out of a hundred actors would have obediently 'registered', Mr Church merely took down his Machiavelli from the shelf and waited quite a time before he let us know that not a syllable had escaped him. This was only one tiny example of that avoidance of cliche which had made this production a memorable experience."[30]

The remainder of the scene is again played out at the table until, at Polonius's insistence, Ophelia rises to follow him out.

The stage setting reverts to that which opened the play, complete with cannon. The characters enter through the rear doors which close behind them, the wicket gate remaining ajar. The King's "rouse" is accompanied by maroons, a full wind band and a wassail song, the noise of which drifts through the open gate, enabling Hamlet to express his disgust by banging it shut. He leans across the cannon as he condemns Claudius's drunkenness. A picture is being built up of a prince who is no respecter of authority or institutions.

The rear doors are flung open and the Ghost is trolleyed in, accompanied by swirling mist, and the cowering figures of Horatio, Marcellus and Barnardo scatter, defending themselves ineffectually with their spears. Hamlet remains near the cannon. As the Ghost reaches a position down left, Horatio, Marcellus and Barnardo keeping their distance by circling the upstage area, it turns and beckons to Hamlet. His companions move quickly in to restrain him, Marcellus handing Barnardo his spear while he and Horatio take hold on Hamlet. In the struggle, Hamlet kicks the spear from Barnardo's hand, causing him to fall, and, by this diversion, escapes to follow the Ghost, who

has disappeared through the double doors.

The cannon is struck, to indicate a change of location, and the rear doors once more fling open to admit the Ghost. It moves down centre and Hamlet follows to take up a position downstage of the Ghost, back to the audience, gazing up at the towering figure. The dominance of his dead father is important in the scene. As Hamlet urges "Haste me to know't" (line 29), he moves in to the Ghost, who brings round the huge arms to enfold him in an embrace. L.C. Knights interpreted the gesture thus:

> "Influenced by the corrupt court around him and his own sense of evil, he gives himself to his father figure,, which appeals as much as anything to what is weak in him not what is strong." [31]

Patrick Magee's voice from within the body of the mechanism was projected by means of an echo microphone, which added to the Ghost's sepulchral tones. As it leaves through the rear doors, which swing open to engulf it, Hamlet, twisting backwards, falls to lie supine on the ground. From this position he delivers the opening section of the speech "O all you host of heaven!". He rises, but later falls to his knees at line 107 "My tables - meet it is I set it down".

The arrival of Horatio and Marcellus is announced by distant cries off-stage. They gather round in some concern and Hamlet continues to look about him as though expecting the Ghost to return. At the first "Swear" he kneels again and at each succeeding cry, he moves to lie face down on the ground, as if attempting to return to his father's protective embrace. It is the first sign of Hamlet's unpreparedness for the task he has been given. The scene ended with an uncharacteristic flourish from Warner, who built to a climax on the closing couplet and exited with a sweeping bow.

When the production returned to Stratford in 1966, a short, five

minute interval was introduced at this point.

For the opening of Act II, the set reverts to that used for Laertes's farewell scene, with table and two chairs centre stage and the bookshelves set in the down left panel. Entering with Reynaldo, Polonius moves directly to the table to pour drinks for them both. He sits down. Polonius establishes an authority and control in this scene principally by remaining seated. Although he does move to Reynaldo ("Marry, here's my drift" line 137) and is brought to his feet by the arrival of Ophelia, there is none of the fussy movement which often accompanies a doddering Polonius. Similarly, his losing the thread of an argument ("At 'closes in the consequence'") is cause for irritation rather than a display of absent-mindedness.

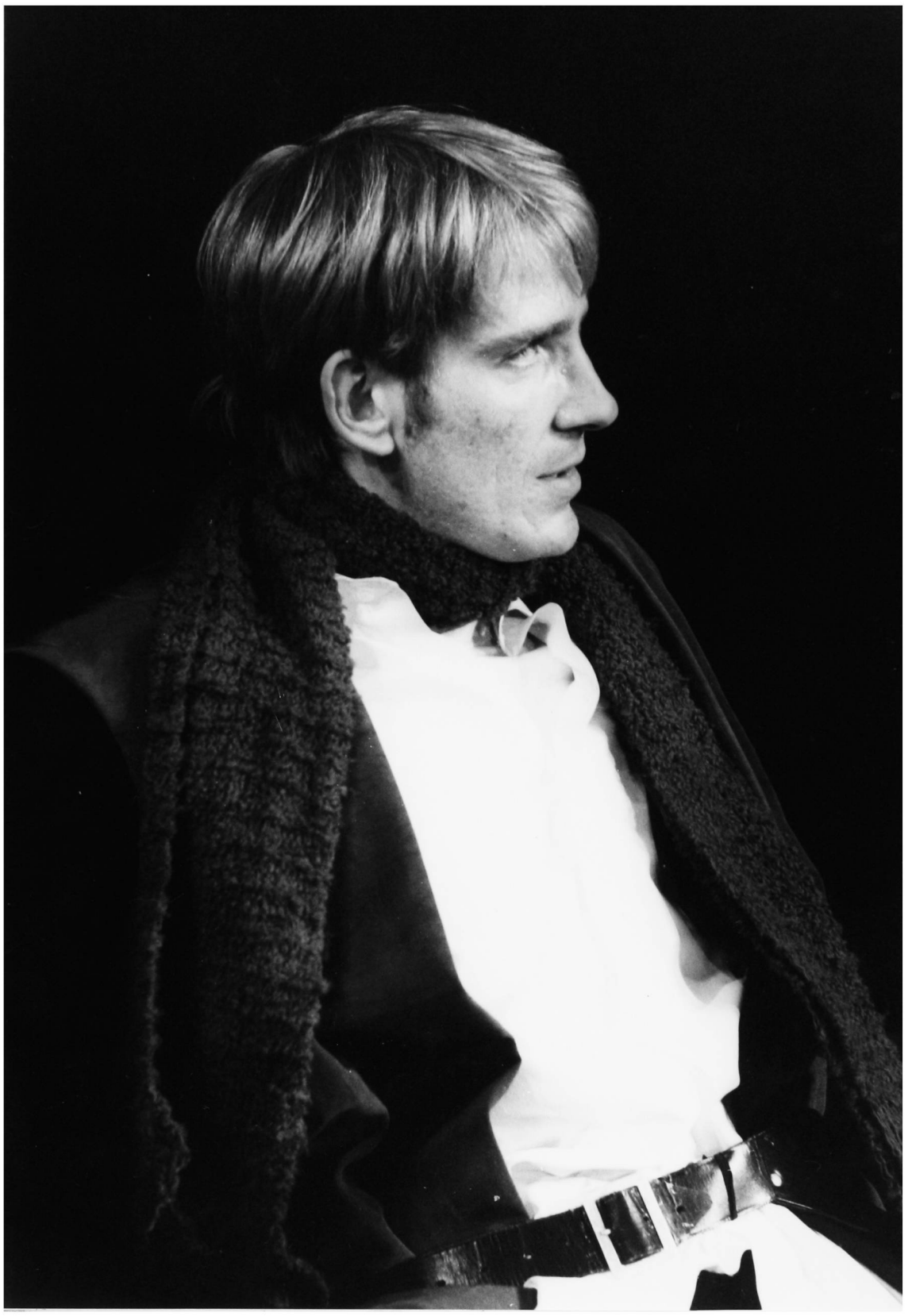
At the beginning of the court scene which follows, the rear doors stand open to reveal a back-drop of naked figures; the four wall panels reflect the same design. The stage is furnished with two thrones, right centre, and a table (on which decanter and goblets are set),placed upstage of them. Behind the table is a high-backed chair. Down left three benches are ranged one behind the other. The Court assembles, together with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, and the King and Queen take their places. Two soldiers mount guard in the upstage entrance. It is a full gathering and includes a group of counsellors, who will occupy the benches down left and verify details when the ambassadors return. Polonius has prepared memoranda, which he hands to them. Claudius himself acknowledges their importance at the conclusion of the ambassadors' business by bringing the Queen to the benches where they are sitting and exchanging formal bows as they depart. We are again made aware of the smooth functioning of the political machine.

The departure of the King and Queen is arrested by Polonius who launches his tortuous account of Hamlet's relationship with his daughter. The Queen, resigned to a lengthy exposition, returns to seat herself on the counsellors' bench. She is suspicious of his prevarications ("his crafty politicking under a smokescreen of guffaws"[32]). Even the King is moved to a gesture of impatience as the curcumlocutions mount. Having read out the letter, Polonius offers it to the Queen. He senses that it is she who will need to verify his story.

No indication is given that Hamlet has overheard the plot to use Ophelia. The Queen, who is the first to be aware of Hamlet, rises as he enters. Left alone with Hamlet, Polonius first affects to be preoccupied with papers he has collected from the counsellors' benches, but moves quickly to intercept him downstage. The scene proceeds with Hamlet circling the stage in an unsuccessful attempt to shake off Polonius's attentions. He slides in between the benches ("if like a crab...") and lowers himself onto his back as he replies "Into my grave". Polonius is then forced to peer in over the benches to take his leave. Hamlet sits up to reply, subsiding face down into his "grave", repeating "except my life". Polonius backs away.

In Hamlet's ensuing encounter with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern the stage furniture is again used to good effect. As he compares Denmark to a prison he sinks into the King's throne, recalling his first entrance flanked by the King and Polonius. This is followed by a session of student horseplay as Hamlet rises and rushes at Rosencrantz, who falls. Picking himself up, he joins forces with Guildenstern and each one grabs an end of Hamlet's long, red scarf and pulls him downstage. As Hamlet turns the tables on them and begins to probe their secret, he gradually hauls them in towards him.

PLATE XIV



David Warner as Hamlet.

The business can be presumed to have lasted until the scarf was dispensed with. By the time the production reopened at Stratford in 1966 the scarf had become a short muffler.

Hamlet, seating himself on the downstage edge of the table, undertakes the dissection of his condition ("I have of late, but wherefore I know not, lost all my mirth..."). He watches their reactions with a detachment which suggests that he is rehearsing his reasons, not unlike his use of the audience in the soliloquies. It was an interpretation of the speech which again sacrificed the poetry.

As Rosencrantz announces the arrival of the players, he moves in to Hamlet who is still seated on the table. He drops to one knee in mock homage as he tells him "they are coming to offer you service", and Hamlet is able neatly to take his cue: "He that plays the King shall be welcome". The Players' entrance, which is often used as an opportunity for a tumbling show, was comparatively muted. It was Peter Hall's habit to present modern parallels to his actors at rehearsal stage. John Kane, one of the players, remembers that Hall had suggested that the entrance "would be little different from the entrance we would make ourselves into Windsor Castle for a Royal Command Performance". He had patently underestimated the actor's instinct. John Kane goes on: "Of course, we could hardly refrain from making some kind of entrance".[33] On this occasion the actor may well have made a shrewder assessment than his director. The entrance into Windsor Castle would not have been shaped and calculated for its impact on a theatre audience.

When the players are shown in, it is clear that not only Hamlet is familiar with the company, but also his fellow students Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, who move in to greet them. As the Players crowd into

the central area, Hamlet sets the Player King on Claudius's throne and leads the Player Queen to Gertrude's. The parallel is quickly established. In a show of hospitality, Hamlet hands round goblets from the table and perches himself on the downstage edge. As he calls for a speech, the book-keeper promptly looks out a script from his pile, finds the correct page and hands it to the First Player. The rest of the players retreat leaving the centre clear and Hamlet, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern withdraw to join Polonius on the benches. William Squire, it was noted, delivered the First Player's speech "with an admirable and lucid flamboyance".[34] It drew an appreciative round of applause from the company. The players are dispatched under the care of Polonius, leaving Hamlet to brief the First Player. Some critics were worried that Polonius, the able politician of this production, was hardly in need of Hamlet's protection, and "look you mock him not" stood out as a gratuitous piece of advice.

Hamlet begins the "rogue and peasant slave" soliloquy sitting on the table. He moves down to the edge of the forestage to pose the question:

> "what would he do,
> Had he the motive and the cue for passion
> That I have?"
>
> (lines 563-565)

He continues to address the ensuing series of questions directly at the audience until he breaks upstage ("Bloody, bawdy villain!" line 583) to direct his rage at the empty throne. He drops onto the edge of the table, disillusioned ("Why, what an ass am I" line 586) but as his anger mounts, he kicks over the king's chair ("And fall a-cursing like a very drab" line 590) and moves quickly centre stage, turning his back to the audience as he applies his mind to a solution. As he formulates the ideas, he turns again to face them.

The press were still critical; there were no big effects in this soliloquy. Warner's close questioning of the audience, "am I a coward?", tempted a reply.

Act III opens with Claudius pacing the stage as he listens to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's report of their meeting with Hamlet and he moves to pour himself a drink at the table. Polonius takes control of the plot to confront Hamlet with Ophelia, giving her a book from the table and leading her down left below the benches to await his arrival. He directs the King to conceal himself in the "tapestry alcove" (the space created by the open rear doors) and subsequently follows him. Ophelia does not, however, stay put but leaves, to return at the conclusion of Hamlet's soliloquy.

As Hamlet enters, he moves immediately downstage to address the audience. He approaches the very edge of the stage and pauses before proceeding with:

> "To die, to sleep -
> To sleep - perchance to dream."
>
> (lines 64-65)

Harold Hobson described the impact of this confrontation with the audience:

> "[He] rakes the first few rows of the stalls with ravaged eyes, searching distractedly for a comfort that is not there or anywhere."[35]

Shades of the romantic Hamlets clung to this soliloquy and many regretted the change. Felix Barker spoke of Warner's "thoughtful but shambling delivery" and, as though describing a breach of etiquette, went on: "this disarming actor even broke the romantic mould by scratching his face".[36] Penelope Gilliat felt that with Warner's particular emphasis on "the insolence of office" (line 73) "he seems to be speaking for a whole debunking generation".[37] John Russell Brown

is critical of his habit of giving "A realistic and dramatically effective moment ... too great a precedence". He cites the two and a half lines which Hamlet addressed to Ophelia at the end of the soliloquy as an example. After arguing for a mellifluous delivery of these lines, he observes that Warner spoke them "with growing volume and power and with a whirling movement away".[38]

When Hamlet catches sight of Ophelia, he turns his back on the audience and moves quickly up between the benches. She returns a brooch to him, which he reluctantly takes and moves away to the table, where he sits in a chair. Several moves have been erased from the prompt book at this point, suggesting that Hall eventually made a decision to keep the actor seated. The move to Ophelia on line 150, "it hath made me mad" is thus given added point and the slapping of her face is made more shocking. In 1966, movement was reintroduced including a moment when Hamlet moves behind Ophelia (now played by Estelle Kohler) and puts his arms around her ("We are arrant knaves all" line 129). Robert Speaight felt that Hamlet's treatment of Ophelia was the most important change from the 1965 production. The relationship had intensified:

> "The brutal kiss before the play, the physical anguish of the nunnery scene - these were boldly justified. In 1965 I never felt the division brought about in Hamlet by Ophelia's deflection; in 1966 I felt it acutely."[39]

Glenda Jackson was undoubtedly the harshest of the three Ophelias and received the roughest treatment at Hamlet's hands. She was a dominant figure and in a production designed to establish modern parallels, Penelope Gilliat detected signs of the liberated woman, "a blurring of the sexual boundaries". She saw it as a performance,

> "full of rancour and fiercely unsentimental, the only Ophelia I have ever seen that has in it the real shrivelled,

> shrewish roots of madness. It is executed with the sort of attack that is usually thought of as a quality of male acting."[40]

The speech which begins "O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!" has moments which actresses often use as pointers to Ophelia's mad scenes. Glenda Jackson left the issue in no doubt:

> "The speech is jagged with pain; 'blasted with ecstacy' is hideously screeched ... and the mood is spiked with a suicidal sarcasm."[41]

The King, outwardly unperturbed by the encounter he has just witnessed, takes a drink before leaving. Polonius and Ophelia follow him out.

The stage is now set in preparation for the play. The table and thrones are struck and the benches arranged in a semi-circle. Steps lead up to a platform, up left, on which stand three high-backed chairs. A carpet which will serve as the players' stage is laid centre and a small "mound" placed on it. The doors up stage remain open and the aperture is backed by a red curtain. The panels revert to their stone facings.

Polonius and Rosencrantz are added to the number at the beginning of the scene. It is likely that Guildenstern is also included (the prompt book records his exit at line 49 but fails to mention his entrance). The players are preparing for their performance as Hamlet enters and he takes over their "stage" to give them his advice. Laughter greets his observation "I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines." (lines 3-4) and murmurs of assent follow his reference to "inexplicable dumb-shows and noise". He singles out a particular actor for the reproof: "and let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them" (lines 37-38).

Hall had been criticised for diminishing the character of Horatio to bring out Hamlet's isolation. Hall himself had spoken of him in

muted terms in his talk to the company: "a diplomat, a secretarial type with a good brain". The relationship with Hamlet was not particularly emphasised and the speech in which Hamlet acknowledges his friendship is almost perfunctory.

As the court assembles, Hamlet is discovered kneeling and Claudius, impatient at his reaction, turns away. Hamlet with clownish insolence, puts the over-sized crown worn by the Player King, on his head, allowing it to slip down onto his nose. He throws it back to the players before turning his attention to Polonius. In 1966 the clowning was prolonged, Hamlet affecting to strike Polonius in the face as he quips "It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf there" (lines 102-103). Polonius's response is simply to sit down.

Hall puts the emphasis in the Play Scene firmly on the King by placing Claudius and Gertrude on the raised platform and the action below them on the carpet. This also has the effect of throwing Hamlet's empty chair into focus. A table has been brought in up right on top of which a fourth chair is placed, which Horatio will occupy. Polonius sits on the bench up right with Ophelia at his side and Hamlet lying on the floor at her feet. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern occupy the bench down left.

The entrance of the Player King and Queen, accompanied by a group of musicians, draws polite applause from the court and the Dumb Show begins. It is clear from the prompt book direction: "Drinks served during dumb-show - General chatter" that the court at first pays little attention. As the mime reaches the moment of the poisoning, a courtier rises. Claudius leads the applause as the Mime concludes. The picture built up of Claudius throughout the whole of the play scene is of a man firmly in control of his emotions. Such a man can undoubtedly withstand the first thrust of The Dumb Show when the full

force of the play scene does not succeed in making him lose his self-control. The Stratford 1966 prompt book gives the most detailed account of the performance of the play. It records that the Player King and Player Queen begin with a ceremonial bow to Claudius and Gertrude and that the Player Queen goes to sit on the "mound" during the Player King's first speech. It also indicates a polite round of applause led by Voltimand following this speech, which, in its cut version, consists of no more than four lines. Hall chose a male actor, Charles Kay, as the Player Queen. He spoke in a light falsetto and wore a half-mask, as did the Player King. Stylised movements accompanied the dialogue; it was a striking and memorable rendering.

At the end of the first section of the play, Hamlet, elated at the success of his plan, kisses Ophelia and tries to initiate a round of applause. There is a buzz of conversation, but no one joins in. Hamlet mounts the platform and sits in the empty chair at his mother's side to ask "Madam, how like you this play?" (line 228). Conversation stops. As Lucianus enters, Hamlet rejoins Ophelia. He waits for the death agonies of the Player King to subside before probing further. The King rises.

Much has been written about this moment in the production, principally as a result of Brewster Mason's reading of the line "Give me some light - away!" Rejecting the histrionic, he delivered it with a controlled disdain which produced a variety of critical reaction:

> "as though his nephew had done nothing more than commit the gaffe of going on too long for the royal taste."
>
> (Penelope Gilliat)[42]

> "the cold anger of the politician who fears only to look a fool when mocked by his undergraduate nephew in public."
>
> (Alan Brien)[43]

John Russell Brown saw it as part of the "psychological realism" which characterised the production:

> "so that verbal interpretation was often new - sometimes to the degree of oddity - and frequently illuminated dramatic situation provocatively ... he spoke the line quietly as a challenging reproof."[44]

Stanley Wells defined the theatrical effect:

> "In a curious way, it achieved a coup-de-theatre by denying one."[45]

It is left to Polonius to raise general consternation with the cry of "Lights, lights, lights!", at which point attendants appear with torches and the stage empties.

Hamlet reflects more his own excitement than offering an accurate observation of Claudius in the line "Why let the stricken deer go weep". He delivers the rhyme kneeling on the players' "stage" in acknowledgement of the part they have played in his triumph. He is joined there by Horatio and they subsequently retire to benches at opposite sides of the stage. The musicians are brought in at this point, so that when Hamlet later calls for recorders they are on hand. They begin playing and continue till Hamlet stops them at the mention of his mother; his attention is engaged. He has remained seated on the bench, affecting unconcern (Hall is again using the technique of the focal actor controlling the scene from a seated position). He rises on the line "O wonderful son that can so stonish a mother!" (line 329). Hamlet, buoyant from his exchange with Guildenstern, throws the recorder back to the musicians and faces Polonius with anticipation: he kneels with exaggerated care to point upstage at the cloud. In his final speech, he shows special care for

the safety of his mother by unbuckling his sword-belt as he vows:

"I will speak daggers to her, but use none".

The stage is cleared and a table (set with four goblets), two high-backed chairs and a bench are placed upstage. A small prie-dieu with a cross is located down left. The rear aperture is backed by folding screens and the wall panel down right shows a wardrobe with decorated double doors. A small set of steps leads up to it (these were dispensed with in 1966). The setting suggests a private chamber.

Claudius's meeting with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern at the opening of Act III Scene 3 takes place at a gathering of the privy council. As the King enters, the counsellors rise from the bench. A valet helps him off with his gown and lays it on the steps below the wardrobe. Claudius takes a goblet from the table. In the prayer scene which follows he will place this same goblet on the prie-dieu - an action which serves to underline his internal conflict.

Many critics felt that the pangs of conscience experienced by Claudius were not consistent with the view of the character taken in this production. The tough politician, proof against Hamlet's public exposure, was felt to be unconvincing in his remorse. Robert Speaight reviewing the production in 1966, did not share the general view. He considered Brewster Mason's treatment of the soliloquy to be "a calm argument of his desperate case"[46], which accorded with his controlled exit from the play.

Hamlet, encountering the kneeling King, makes his deliberations on killing Claudius the subject of a discourse with the audience. As in his soliloquies, he approaches the edge of the stage and advances his reasons for delay as if to seek approval for such a

decision.

The Closet scene is set well downstage, backed by a figured arras hanging from a suspended curtain rail. In front of it stands a solid, black bed with black and gold covers, which dominates the stage. As the sole piece of furniture, it becomes the focal point of the action. The Queen enters, clad in a night-dress, and removes her wig before getting into bed; the night-attire and cropped hair contrast with the carefully presented public face. She appears vulnerable and exposed to Hamlet's attack. Hamlet paces about the bed in the early exchanges until Gertrude, fearful of his intentions, attempts to get out as she threatens, "I'll set those to you that can speak" (line 17). Hamlet intervenes, pushing her backwards onto the bed. At the sound of Polonius's voice, he leaps astride his mother and stabs Polonius through the arras. The body is held impaled upon the sword for several seconds before falling into sight. The Queen rushes downstage, fearful for her own life. Hamlet throws down his sword as he discovers the identity of the eavesdropper and Gertrude returns to sit on the bed where Hamlet joins her. The rising passion of his arguments forces the Queen into more submissive attitudes until she finds herself lying on her back, head downstage, with Hamlet leaning over her as she begs "O Hamlet, speak no more" (line 88). It is difficult to reconcile Robert Speaight's analysis of the scene, which he sees as having "hardly a trace of Oedipal special pleading",[47] with this overtly sexual attitude.

The Ghost's appearance was dictated by its size and mobility. It was brought in through the rear doors to appear behind the bed-head. The massive figure seemed incongruous in the intimate setting of the closet. Hamlet draws back. Gertrude's failure to see her

first husband produces a cry of anguish from him which recalls his catalogue of loss - "Of life, of crown, of queen at once dispatched." (Act I Scene 5 line 75). The turmoil over, the scene ends on a subdued note.

In the scene which follows, Claudius himself unwittingly recalls the events of the Closet Scene by sitting on the bed as he is told of Polonius's death. The critic of The Scotsman (27 December 1965) observed that one of the less happy features of setting the scene so firmly in a bedchamber was the Queen's need to confront courtiers in her night-dress. This would, however, seem to miss the point that the director was underlining the distressing events of the night by having her so depart from expected decorum. As the scene ends, the figures of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are seen crossing the fore-stage in search of Hamlet.

The arras is flown and the bed struck, leaving a bare stage. As Hamlet enters, he crosses down right and, drawing his sword, thrusts it into a crack between the flagstones and kneels above it. The sword which he has used to kill Polonius becomes the cross before which he confesses. The stage gradually fills with his pursuers. As Hamlet becomes aware of them, he gives to the line "O, here they come" an emphasis which caused John Russell Brown to comment:

> "'Here they come' is illuminated with a contemporary inflection that marks 'they' as a composite description of restrictive and uncomprehending authority."[48]

The line "Hide fox, and all after" sees Hamlet breaking quickly up centre and out through the doors, the Switzers in pursuit. He reappears a moment later at the entrance down right and crosses the forestage.

The setting reverts to the King's private chamber, used for the Prayer Scene in Act III Scene 3, the only change being that the rear

doors are now shut. The council reassembles about the table, the King taking the central chair. He signs a paper handed to him by a counsellor. Hamlet is led in by Guildenstern, who carries Hamlet's sword. Thus disarmed, his guard of eight Switzers seems excessive. Stanley Wells, commenting on the production's heavy use of extras, felt in this scene that

> "there was something comic and sad about the discrepancy between the machinery of state and the self-conscious inadequacy of the figure trapped inside it."[49]

Hamlet quickly takes refuge at the prie-dieu, where he kneels. From this position he conducts his banter with Claudius and on hearing the King's plan to send him to England, he strikes the prie-dieu. His sharp rejoinder, "Good", is again delivered with a modern inflection. John Russell Brown commented on his delivery of the single word:

> "Besides the obvious irony there is a flashlight exposure of Hamlet's situation, his tense nerves and distaste of honest words: he mocks the King with his own platitudes and defies him to no immediate good purpose."[50]

All furniture is struck from the stage, the central aperture is backed by a sky-cloth and the panels are removed to enhance the sense of space. Act IV Scene 4 opens with an impressive parade of military strength to herald the entrance of Fortinbras. This is in keeping with a production which lays stress on the political aspects of the play. A cannon, cart and seige engine precede Fortinbras and the Captain with six drummers and spearmen bring up the rear. Such a show of strength has the same overwhelming effect on the unheroic figure of Hamlet as the guard which brought him before the King in Act IV Scene 2. The critics reacted with some irritation to the weight given to the Fortinbras scenes:

> "His two appearances are staged with lavish pomp and heavily pointed as key events in the story. He has not many lines, but he is made to speak them incredibly slowly and occupy the stage far longer than Shakespeare intended."[51]

It seems likely, however, that Hall was expressing his distaste for the military ruler by an excess of martial imagery. He had already revealed his hand in his talk to the company:

> "I don't know about you, but I would not particularly like to live in Denmark under Fortinbras."

During the soliloquy which follows, J.C. Trewin found what he felt to be the key to Warner's performance in the line:

> "I do not know
> Why yet I live to say 'This thing's to do'."
>
> (line 43)

It was spoken slowly with the arms outflung. Trewin compares it with Richard II's line:

> "I cannot do it, yet I'll hammer it out"
>
> (Richard II Act V Scene 5 line 5)

(Warner himself had played Richard II at Stratford in 1964).

Trewin, however, could not resist a comparison with Olivier's rendering of the Hamlet line in 1937, which James Agate had described as "trumpet-moaned". John Russell Brown was generally more sympathetic to Warner's attempts at finding new readings and was able to detect at least one grand effect when, having delivered the final line of the soliloquy with a slow self-absorption, "he breaks off into a grandiloquent gesture and a broad and quickening exit".[52]

In 1965, this ended the two and a half hour first part.

The setting for Act IV Scene 5, which opens the second part of the play, reverts to that used for Act II Scene 2. The central aperture and the four panels are hung with frescoes depicting naked figures and a table set with high-backed chairs is placed centre stage. Two thrones are set right centre and three benches down left.

In the Mad Scene, Ophelia's deranged state is quickly established.

The wild hair and loose gown are in startling contrast to the severe figure of the earlier scenes. She sits herself unceremoniously in the throne vacated by the Queen and accompanies her harsh, discordant songs on a lute. The first appearance concludes with her jumping down from the bench she has mounted and banging the lute on the ground. Jan Kott in his article on the production for The Sunday Times saw Ophelia's madness as a deliberate act:

> "She ... ends up opting for disengagement and so in different ways is unfaithful both to her father and to Hamlet. In her silent revolt she loses her way; and so can fall back on madness and her suicide is not a sentimental gesture but rather a gesture - the final gesture - of revolt."
>
> (31 October 1965)

This view of the madness as a positive decision on Ophelia's part may well provide a clue to the strength of Glenda Jackson's performance. Penelope Gilliat, in her review for The Observer, describes a significant piece of business:

> "When she says 'Pray you, mark' to the twittering Gertrude ... she shouts the words as though she could do murder, drumming a heel on the floor and lifting her upper lip in a rictus of contempt."
>
> (22 August 1965)

It was a tough, strident, eccentric performance which confounded the critics. A variety of interpretations of the reading were produced:

> "driven to suicide as a result of sexual frustration rather than shattered innocence."
>
> (Glasgow Herald, 21 August 1965)

> "exceptional and electric with an intelligence that harasses the court and a scornful authority full of Hamlet's own self-distaste."
>
> (Penelope Gilliat, The Observer 22 August 1965)

Harold Hobson saw the hand of the director set firmly on the performance:

> "Glenda Jackson is given a harsh, bitter, setting-teeth-on-edge recipe for Ophelia and she loyally cooks according to the specifications."
>
> (The Sunday Times 22 August 1965)

Perhaps the answer is to be found in Glenda Jackson's work for another director the year before when she had played Charlotte Corday in Peter Brook's production of The Marat Sade by Peter Weiss. Brook had been at pains to immerse his company in a study of authentic madness. This included advice from a psychiatrist, visits to asylums and studies of painting by Breughel, Hogarth and Goya. The company also read articles on mental illness and were shown two films on the subject. They were encouraged to "'dig out the madman' from themselves and to find personal expressions of madness".[53] Glenda Jackson confesses to being profoundly disturbed by the experience and her playing of Ophelia was undoubtedly influenced by the work with Brook. The authentic dimension given to the mad scenes arrested audiences by its originality and avoidance of what Brook had referred to as "traditional prettified or meoldramatic stage madness".[54] Glenda Jackson left the cast of Hamlet in November 1965 to play in a revival of The Marat Sade.

Janet Suzman's Ophelia did not have the same effect. Shrill, almost shrewish, she appears to have given more indication of incipient madness in the early scenes and thus lessened the impact of the mad scenes themselves. Estelle Kohler aroused more pity than her predecessors. She was a more appealing Ophelia and her attire in the mad scenes had changed to a mud-bespattered slip, which presaged her death. Robert Speaight wrote of her performance:

> "Miss Kohler's Ophelia keeps her secrets, as Ophelia should, until she lets them out when she is no longer in her right mind. Here was a conventional girl doing what society expected of her but all the time her nascent womanhood was in revolt."[55]

The Laertes rebellion was the subject for a more than usual amount of violence. The noises off-stage which announced the insurrection suggested a mob in a destructive mood. The bangs and shouts were interspersed with noises of an axe as Laertes's men forced their way in. The uprising had an excitement which the incident often lacks. The King, however, always appeared in control ("a born dictator, massively built, brazenly voiced, who never flinches at the threats of mobs or the swords of assassins".[56]). Confident of containing the problem, he seats himself at the table.

Ophelia re-enters and moves to the Queen's throne where she takes up the lute she has left behind. She places it down centre and kneels above it. Laertes follows her and kneels at her side. She rises, moving about the court distributing her flowers and returns to kneel again before exiting up centre. The King, who has remained seated, now rises and moves to put a hand on Laertes's shoulder and leads him off down left. The Queen picks up the lute and leaves by a different exit. The courtiers leave too and the Switzers close the rear doors on the empty stage.

The panels having been turned to present their stone faces, the letter scene takes place on a stage bare of furniture. The setting quickly reverts to the King's chamber, as for Act III Scene 3 and Act IV Scene 3, with the addition of a curtain across the rear aperture. Hall again uses the technique of keeping his actors seated, which has the effect of concentrating attention on the plotting. Claudius plays the early part of the scene seated in the upstage chair, inviting Laertes's confidence by offering him drink. Laertes eventually joins him at the table, seated rather less securely, rising again as the Messenger enters. The King moves to join Laertes at line 69 as he flatters him with his reputation as a swordsman. He

returns to sit at line 97 as he proposes the dual with Hamlet.

Gertrude delivers the Willow Speech kneeling at the prie-dieu. The sorrowful account of Ophelia's death is thus invested with overtones of a prayer for her departed soul. The King goes to comfort his wife as the tearful Laertes departs, raising her from her knees and supporting her as they leave. Some reviewers found it difficult to assimilate Elizabeth Spriggs's delivery of Gertrude's speech, "that purple passage", into a production so determinedly anti-poetic. Robert Speaight saw no such problem:

> "in a production which was vocally rather thin her narration of Ophelia's drowning supplied a precious minute or two of sensitive obedience to the verse."[57]

At the conclusion of the scene, the stage is cleared of furniture and the grave trap opened down centre. A mound of mock earth surrounds it, helping to break up the solid, marbled floor with a suggestion of the outdoors. The panels down left and up right show worn memorial tablets and the rear aperture reveals an untidy grave with disintegrating iron surround and broken monument. It is an ill-kept, crumbling place, which will give point to Laertes's complaint at the lack of ceremony for his sister's burial. The noise of rain is heard intermittently throughout the scene.

An accident in striking the previous scene on the first night gave rise to an unusual opening. A glass drinking vessel containing the King's drink smashed onto the floor and during the subsequent lengthy blackout came the sound of raucous singing. The lights went up on the two grave diggers busy with brooms rather than spades. Their improvised clowning earned them a round of applause. In the ensuing scene, the critics singled out David Waller's First Gravedigger, who "not only enjoyed his own jokes but played them in a pointedly obvious way so that we enjoyed 'seeing them coming' a mile off."[58]

The planned opening to the scene saw the First Gravedigger enter followed by his companion. He duly lowers himself into the grave and the second gravedigger hands him the spade. Much of the banter between Hamlet and the Gravedigger takes place with Hamlet himself sitting on the edge of the grave. A macabre touch is added to the moment with Yorick's skull as arm and leg bones are produced. Earth is visible pitting the teeth of the skull and the Gravedigger, with the casualness of one familiar with death, pokes earth from its eye-sockets. Warner again used an unexpected inflection to arrest the audience's attention at the moment when he receives the skull. John Russell Brown interpreted it as follows:

> "'This?' carries such a shock of precognition - an incipient sense of the need to meet death in personal terms - that the word 'this' seems totally eloquent, a reluctant comfrontation of destiny."[59]

Warner's Hamlet appeared vulnerable and unprepared.

Hamlet rises at the approach of the funeral procession, which makes its way to the graveside. There is a rainstorm and the royal party are sheltering under a canopy. The bearers place the coffin on the planks across the grave and as they take up the ropes to lower it into the earth, Laertes momentarily raises the lid to take a last look at Ophelia. Robert Speaight found the business unconvincing:

> "How could Laertes have wrenched the lid of a closed coffin? Surely the solution here is to leave the coffin open, covered by a pall."[60]

The First Gravedigger throws in a shovel-full of earth, which gives rise to Laertes's line "Hold off the earth awhile" (line 243). As Hamlet reveals himself, Laertes scrambles out of the grave and brings him to the ground by tackling him about the knees. A struggle ensues and attendants drag them apart, while the Queen retreats to the safety of her husband's side.

The grave and monuments are struck and the panels present their stone facing. The rear doors are shut. The scene between Hamlet and Horatio is played on a bare stage with a single high-backed chair. The absence of specific location helps the sense of suspended action which precedes the duel. There is little movement recorded in the prompt book over the first sixty lines of the scene and Hamlet, seated for the first part of the foolery with Osric (a performance which Robert Speaight described as "mercifully brisk"), rises only when the mention of Laertes engages his interest. Hamlet's response to Osric's line "I should impart a thing to you from his majesty" gave Warner the opportunity to voice his feelings about the King by using an unexpected emphasis. The prompt book underlines the word "will" in Hamlet's reply, "I <u>will</u> receive it, sir, with all diligence of spirit", the implication being that Hamlet's inclination is to have no further discourse with the King, even through a messenger. Harold Hobson drew attention to Warner's handling of the last speech before the arrival of the court, in which Hamlet talks of there being special providence in the fall of a sparrow:

> "Mr Warner ... cannot bring himself to believe that the providence extends also to him ... He says the readiness is all, and for an instant his face quivers. He makes great effort at mastering himself and then, condemned but not now afraid, walks off the stage firmly."[61]

The set is prepared for the final scene of the play. The rear doors are swung open, to reveal the tapestry, figured with war-horses, and attendants bring on a long trestle table which stretches down the left side of the stage. Behind it, a smaller table is placed and a third table right centre together with a high-backed chair. The court assembles and the King advances to bring Hamlet and Laertes together centre stage, where he joins their hands. "Give us the foils,

come on" (line 252) signals the start of preparations and Hamlet and Laertes go to the trestle table. Laertes removes his sword-belt and lays it on the table, a piece of business which recalls the importance of the choice of swords.

The director frequently uses the reaction of the court to underline a point throughout the ensuing scene. There is a buzz of conversation as Hamlet boasts that Laertes's skill shall "Stick fiery off indeed" (line 255). The King cuts off further comment by getting the duel underway. He gestures to the court to be seated and bids Osric give the contestants the foils. Laertes collects a second foil, moves to the King and the choice is made. The court murmurs its approval as the King raises his cup "to Hamlet's better breath", and as the King drinks (line 272), the court follows suit. The judges move into position and the King sits, the court again taking their cue from the King. Cannons, drums and trumpets announce the start of the contest. Hall established Hamlet's superiority in the duel much as he had done with Claudius and Polonius elsewhere in the play, by having the central character remain still. It is the over-active Laertes who sweats to get in a thrust from all angles while Hamlet treats him almost with disdain. Harold Hobson construed it thus:

> "If, as people seem to believe, one of the functions of Hamlet is to make the commonalty feel their commonness, I have never seen the thing better done. It is an assertion of distinction based not on artificial considerations, but on an obvious superiority of nerve and skill."[62]

Hamlet, having refused the cup the King has prepared, earns the applause of the court as Laertes concedes "A touch, a touch, I do confess't" (line 274). As the Queen offers Hamlet her napkin, the King crosses down left, patting Hamlet on the shoulder as he goes. The court rises as the Queen mops Hamlet's brow, adding an unwitting

irony to their deference as they raise their cups with the Queen. Their laughter is heard as Hamlet addresses Laertes, "I am afeard you make a wanton of me" (line 297), and their chatter eases the tension with Osric's pronouncement "Nothing neither way" (line 299). Laertes's "Have at you now!" produces a shocked silence which helps underline Hamlet's reaction to the sudden thrust. Incredulously he shows to the court the blood from the wound. The moment of suspended action is violently broken as a scuffle breaks out between the contestants. Jan Kott saw the whole of the duel as leading up to this moment - the slow opening a demonstration, a ballet before the King and Queen, the calm before the storm:

> "suddenly they begin to fight really bitterly, they drop their rapiers, begin to claw and punch each other. This is brilliantly devised illumination of a generation which prefers to do nothing but in an ultimate situation will turn and fight cruelly, primitively. Hamlet is just precisely such a young man."[63]

The court closes in and the last stages of the fight are played as though in a boxing ring. The fighting is curtailed as the Queen falls forward across the table, vomiting the poison onto the stage. As with the cropped head in the Closet Scene, this production allowed its audience no illusions about the Queen. The King moves to support her, while Horatio goes to Hamlet's aid and Osric to Laertes's side. The Queen moves unsteadily down centre, where she collapses and dies.

Hamlet, having shown little emotion at the death of his mother, moves towards the King. The first contact he makes with his sword is almost playful; he nicks a vein in the King's neck. This produces the reaction "O, yet defend me, friends, I am but hurt" (line 322). Hamlet's response is vicious: he stabs the King and thrusts a knee into him. The action recalls Kott's analysis of the

brutal ending to the duel. Hamlet's final act is to pour the remains of the poison cup into the King's ear, as Claudius had done to his father. The task at last accomplished, Hamlet will again recall his father as he dies, by kissing the miniature which still hangs about his neck.

Hamlet's own death is determinedly anti-Romantic. He crosses to lodge himself on the front of the table, laughing ironically as he bequeaths Denmark to a king so different from himself. Even Horatio is not allowed to complete "And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!" Cutting across his words comes the sound of a door being broken down and the noise of cannon and drums. The moment is reminiscent of the Laertes rebellion. Fortinbras's entrance is splendid. He is clad in white (symbolising "political virginity"[64]), and the subservient court, quick to transfer their loyalty, kneel as Fortinbras claims his rights to the kingdom. The four captains carry out Hamlet's body spreadeagled between them, the head lolling back, the eyes staring. As the troops clear the remaining bodies, the lights fade leaving a spotlight to illuminate the departing cortege, whose slow progress is punctuated by cannon fire. The critics were left pondering on the conventional ending:

> "The boldest stoke in Peter Hall's Hamlet is its last. In a production whose determined novelty has been trumpeted for months, he deliberately ends with the image which has closed every Hamlet you remember, formally conventional as a Byzantine icon."[65]

That Peter Hall's production of Hamlet turned a new face to the sixties is indisputable, and there is ample evidence to suggest that it mirrored many of the preoccupations of that decade. Its most penetrating investigation concerned the balance between the state

and the individual. The critic of The Times analysed it thus:

> "The world it inhabits is that of confident public life ... The cold war with Norway gets full emphasis ... Hamlet himself, trapped in this hive of bustling militarism and courtly display, is from the start in a condition of existential panic. He has no clear identity: all he knows is that the solid appearance of the court is a facade for shifting values and lies. No one can be trusted: and the Ghost's call for vengeance is an invitation to involve himself in the life of action from which lies originate. 'They fool me to the top of my bent' is his key line.
>
> It makes sense and it connects with a widespread current attitude to public life."
>
> (20 August 1965)

Such a particular view of the play was bound to produce anomalies, especially as regards the characters. The audience was asked to accept a self-contained, urbane Claudius, who remains unruffled by Hamlet's provocation at the play, but who can kill crudely and agonise over his crime. The hard-headed politician embodied in this Polonius is unlikely material for mockery and his rebellious daughter for so lyrical a death. Such were the risks, and though the inconsistencies worried the critics, the production gave original insights which captured a new generation of young theatre-goes and finally won over a good number of the old. By the time it was revived in 1966, Robert Speaight is able to say:

> "The play is attuned to an age of anxiety ...
> We do Mr Warner a great injustice if we condescend to him as a teenager's Hamlet."[66]

The lack of tragic stature in its central character (J.C. Trewin mourned: "a great part shrinks to the proportions deemed to be modish in 1965 and the great lines failed to ring"[67]) undoubtedly stemmed from Hall's view of the play. He saw it not as an ennobling, regenerative tragedy but as "a clinical dissection of life". The redistribution of emphasis caused Ronald Bryden to conclude:

> "In Hall's production, Hamlet is no longer the imperfect tragedy Eliot saw. It's the perfected tragedy of an unfinished hero."[68]

Preoccupation with the hero is always likely to overshadow other performances in the play. The critics, however, found time to applaud Tony Church's performance as Polonius, and, with reservations, Brewster Mason's Claudius. Elizabeth Spriggs's Gertrude had mixed reviews which ranged from "perfection" to "nonentity", while Glenda Jackson's eccentric Ophelia attracted more attention than usual; the critics were engaged but unconvinced by her hard, individualistic portrayal. Subsequent Ophelias softened the edges, but Glenda Jackson's uncompromising performance was the one which caught the imagination.

The production transferred on the 22 December 1965 to The Aldwych, by which time it had a more stable look, Warner's performance in particular having settled down. The public, conditioned perhaps by the massive amount of attention which the Stratford opening had attracted, were more receptive. The cast changes were few (the most notable being a new Ophelia, Janet Suzman, who had in fact opened at Stratford on the 8 November, and Brewster Mason doubling as the Ghost). The production had changed little. It had been brought to The Aldwych as part of The Royal Shakespeare Company's general policy of transfers to the capital, though its arrival coincided with one of the company's perennial struggles with The Arts Council on the subject of raising its grant. Peter Hall, unsuccessful in obtaining funds to continue the current scale of operations, announced reductions in staff and a policy of repeating successful productions. Speaking at the reception to welcome the company to Stratford for the 1966 season, Hall made a virtue of necessity:

> "The object of the season is to show a very broad-based view of Shakespeare at the top of his form ... We are offering you redevelopment and re-study of major work we believe in, which we trust and hope will be better because of knowledge and experience."[69]

Hamlet duly took its place in the 1966 season, together with the two parts of Henry IV, which had previously been mounted in 1964 and which were now to be re-directed, with Ian Holm returning as Hal. Twelfth Night was to be the new production, adding to its traditional box office appeal Diana Rigg in the role of Viola. Miss Rigg was fresh from the popular television series The Avengers, where her role as Emma Peel had brought her national recognition. The fifth play was announced as being by a dramatist other than Shakespeare, though details were kept secret. It was, in fact, Tourneur's The Revenger's Tragedy which Trevor Nunn was to direct, with Ian Richardson as Vendice. The production, which opened on the 6th October, played in the Hamlet sets. The season was a skilful piece of management and salesmanship on the part of Peter Hall, and though it produced the inevitable complaints about the company marking time and serving up old dishes, it had some surprising successes, chief amongst which was the emergence of Trevor Nunn as a director of standing.

Hamlet prepared for its third appearance. The production in essence remained the same, but there was considerable re-casting. Estelle Kohler became the third Ophelia and David Warner, who felt himself in danger of becoming jaded, looked forward to the change ("It sparks off a different performance in me".[70]). Michael Jayston took over as Laertes and Christopher Bidmead as Fortinbras, while Brewster Mason continued to double usurper and usurped. Since its opening in 1965, the production had undergone some twenty changes of cast. The critics by now had mellowed towards the production.

Gareth Lloyd-Evans reflected the new mood:

> "The chief interest in this revival lies, perhaps, in how far it confirms the extremes of judgement which the originality of the first production forced upon audiences. What is now clearer is the subtlety of the production's retention of a renaissance ambience while standing as an image for the twentieth century."[71]

Of the new-comers, Michael Jayston as Laertes made a more positive and favourable impact than his predecessor, Charles Thomas, and Estelle Kohler had toned down the harsh, discordant Ophelia of Glenda Jackson to produce a more sympathetic portrait. Brewster Mason and Tony Church continued to receive good notices and there was growing approval for Elizabeth Spriggs. Robert Speaight, returning to David Warner's Hamlet, found that, despite a continued tendency to emphasise unimportant words within a line, his tone and tempo were less wayward:

> "The discords are there, of course, even violently when occasion warrants. But the performance has now a sequence and fluidity, above all a pace, which it did not have before."[72]

Hall himself felt that his production of Hamlet, together with The Wars of the Roses, fell into a period which he regarded as a pinnacle of achievement for the company. These same productions, together with Pinter's The Homecoming and Schönberg's Moses and Aaron at Covent Garden, Hall also named as a high point in his own career as a director. He refuted the suggestion, however, that the director had in some respects eclipsed the star actor. But the director's role had changed; he now had more power to conceive and mould a production. It was Hall's contention that

> "there needs to be an outside controlling intelligence. That's the director. If he does it well - he will allow the actors to function. And the better the actors are the better the play is."[73]

In 1962 he had voiced similar sentiments in a discussion about theatre:

> "The director is a chairman of a committee with not only the casting vote but, one hopes, with all the cunning and hypocrisy to make the committee vote the way he wants it to vote."[74]

From a man who recognised that the theatre must make its voice heard in administration and government as well as on the stage, the analogy is revealing.

For good or ill, Peter Hall had firmly adjusted the balance from the star system to the company concept in the five years which had elapsed since he took over The Royal Shakespeare Company, and the unity of style apparent in the 1965 season was tribute to this. The previous season had seen seven history plays handled by three directors in collaboration - a relatively easy task to produce a recognisably common style. But in 1965 five directors worked independently on five different productions with their separate demands, three comedies and two tragedies, and the company style, which was one of Hall's objectives when taking over in 1960, was readily apparent. John Russell Brown assessed his achievement at the conclusion of the 1965 season:

> "As a director Peter Hall has boldness and originality; the creator of a real company, he believes in maintaining an individual concept for a play. He finds one that is grounded in a notion of contemporary society and character; and he applies it strictly and consistently to surprise his audience and attempt a revaluation by main force. Undoubtedly Hamlet took the critics unprepared and is the most interesting and revealing production of the season."[75]

In 1968 the succession passed to Trevor Nunn, a firm believer in the Hall approach and the company he had created. The last of the post-war productions of Hamlet in the main house at Stratford is under his direction.

Hamlet

1970

Director: Trevor Nunn

Hamlet: Alan Howard

CHAPTER 6

"The play's the thing"

> "Through the agency of illusion, the prince has at last separated appearance from reality, hypocrisy from truth. The theatre has been his touchstone."[1]

Taking over as director of The Royal Shakespeare Company in 1968, Trevor Nunn faced a very different problem from his predecessor. In 1960 the old Memorial Theatre was ripe for change; Peter Hall's legacy contained much which had to be preserved. The company concept was built on continuity. At the same time Trevor Nunn was faced with the task of making an impact on a company which already had a considerable international reputation.

Nunn had a similar background to Hall; both were born in Suffolk, both read English at Cambridge. Nunn had been invited by Hall to join the company as an Associate Director in 1965 and, following an inauspicious start, achieved an outstanding success with his production of Tourneur's The Revenger's Tragedy in his second season. In 1967 he directed his first Shakespeare play for the company with a successful production of The Taming of the Shrew. By the following year he had established himself sufficiently to become a popular choice as Hall's successor, though there were those outside the organisation who wondered at the wisdom of appointing Hall's protege. The continuity was assured, but the two proved very different. Nunn was a private man and where Hall had courted publicity and enjoyed the politics of management, Nunn professed himself happier directing plays.

Committed as he was to many of Hall's ideas, his methods of working on a production were, nonetheless, different. He saw the director's

job in rehearsal as one of diplomacy; he encouraged his company to contribute ideas and allowed an interpretation to evolve. Where Hall had led from the front, Nunn preferred to remain in the background. The difference in style and emphasis between the two directors is mirrored in their separate productions of Hamlet. In an interview with Peter Ansorge, Nunn acknowledges his indebtedness to Hall for investing Shakespeare's plays with a modern relevance, but at the same time recognises that each director will work on the plays from his own standpoint:

> "I don't tend to see the Shakespeare plays so much in terms of creating an entire society, a world picture: the Jan Kott images of ladders leading to power, the development of history ... In most of our work we are concerned with the human personalities of a King or Queen rather than with their public roles."[2]

It was this interest in exploring the private rather than the public face of Shakespeare's monarchs which had led Nunn to the three late plays, Pericles, Prince of Tyre, The Winter's Tale and Henry VIII in the previous season. He directed the two latter plays himself, Terry Hands directing Pericles, and all shared a common line of investigation. Nunn saw each central figure as a man who had lost or destroyed everything he had and who had been forced to rebuild. Thus each production began with the image of an individual: a vast Renaissance man at the beginning of Pericles, a spinning figure of a man at the opening of The Winter's Tale and a suggestion of the Holbein portrait at the beginning of Henry VIII. His mentor had used a similar idea with the massive cannon which was the pre-set in the 1965 Hamlet. But by the time Nunn approached his own production of Hamlet in 1970 he had fused the notion of the symbol with the setting. For the three late plays, he had designed what had become known as the chamber setting:

> "We've abandoned flying scenery. We want the stage to represent earth, (as for the Elizabethans) and underneath the stage lies hell, the unknown, the darkly occult. Above it is a roof fretted with golden fire, the gods, heaven, Apollo."[3]

The tone of the tragedy in his 1970 Hamlet is again private, emphasising the relationship within the family and concentrating above all on the prince and the state of his mind. The production showed us a mind at breaking point and the madness was seen not as a political decision by the prince but as the manifestation of a man under pressure. This Hamlet was a manic-depressive. Nunn used the chamber setting to focus this aspect of his production. Christopher Morley, who succeeded John Bury as Head of Design, had constructed a set which resembled a white, slatted box. Lit directly from above, it suggested the sterile intensity of a psychiatric clinic.

The stage plan in the Production Records shows a raked stage rising by seven inches at the upstage end. The floor is figured in sections of regular wooden blocks running upstage and contains a trap-door up left centre and the grave trap down left centre. The slatted white side walls, which are at right angles to the audience, have no entrances, except for two sections down right and down left which can be flown for the striking and setting of props. The slatted rear wall consists of a series of modules which form sliding screens to give access to the stage. The set is "roofed" by slatted sections which rise from the top of the rear wall to the proscenium arch, giving a perspective to the stage picture.

It is interesting to compare Morley's Hamlet set with Sally Jacob's designs for Peter Brook's production of A Midsummer Night's Dream later in the same season. The "roof" is replaced by a gallery, but the high, white walls which enclose the acting area have a similar impact.

PLATE XV

Setting and Costumes for the 1970 production, seen as Hamlet welcomes the players, Act II Scene 2.

Nunn's intention in developing the chamber setting was to throw the actor into relief and this was heightened in his production of Hamlet by the approach to costume design. The overall colour used was white, except for Hamlet, who wore black. The contrast was extreme and had a powerful focusing effect both on his physical presence and the blackness of his mood. (Ophelia in her mad scenes exchanged her white dress for black.) The director was then able to make an interpretative point when, following Hamlet's bruising encounter with Claudius after the death of Polonius, he appears, purged, in pure white for the meeting with Fortinbras. The contrast of the early court scenes is later reversed when Hamlet encounters the mourning party at Ophelia's funeral.

Throughout the production, the male characters wear trousers, not unlike jeans, with tunics and coats which vary from short to full-length and are trimmed with fur, as are the boots. There is a "hippy" influence, which is echoed in the strings of beads worn by the players. The latter are the only characters allowed a splash of colour, which gives extra impact to their entrance. Hamlet's black attire is devoid of decoration: a simple jacket over shirt trousers and boots. A crucifix hangs about his neck and he also wears a long, black clerical gown during the course of the play. His change of costume comprises a white, leather waistcoat over white shirt and corded trousers with fur-trimmed boots. The female characters echo the general theme with white dresses, amply cut and trimmed with fur on the sleeves and cuffs. Ophelia's black dress for the mad scenes is full-skirted.

Unlike Hall, who brought in a young and relatively untried actor to play Hamlet, Nunn chose an actor of established reputation.

Following his debut at The Belgrade Theatre, Coventry in 1958, Alan Howard had moved by way of The Royal Court Theatre, Chichester, The Mermaid and The West End to join The Royal Shakespeare Company in 1966. His Shakespearian roles already included Bassanio, Lysander, Angelo and Bolingbroke, but it was as Lussurioso in Nunn's production of The Revenger's Tragedy that he first caught the eye at Stratford. Several major roles followed, including a much acclaimed Achilles in 1968, and in 1970 he played, in addition to Hamlet, Mephistopheles in a Theatre-Go-Round production of Doctor Faustus, Ceres in The Tempest and doubled the roles of Theseus and Oberon in Peter Brooke's production of A Midsummer Night's Dream

The critic, Ronald Bryden, had taken an unusual decision to attend rehearsals for Hamlet to study the director and actors at work. In an article for The Observer, he analysed Howard's technique:

> "intelligent to a fault in his refusal to take the simple, unambiguous line of direct feeling through any role. He is a brilliant elaborator, an infinitely fertile inventor of ironies, jokes and defensive strategies for implying emotion by denying it."
>
> (7 June 1970)

He had found Howard constructing his Hamlet as "a glittering sardonic concealer of his genuine feelings, the most adept Machiavellian in a Machiavellian court"; his was a strong Hamlet where Warner's had been weak. He was a well-set figure, handsome, confident and possessed of a voice which, though lacking something in resonance, had considerable range. J.C. Trewin spoke for a generation of older critics in welcoming the new Hamlet:

> "what a relief it is to have again at Stratford a Hamlet ... who could conceivably be the expectancy and rose of the fair state."[4]

Robert Speaight added his approval:

> "The performance had a style to which Mr Warner never pretended; true to itself, it was still in line with other classical interpretations of the part; beautifully modulated in voice, though a little stiff in movement; carrying off the big effects with ease; intelligent without cerebration, and sensitive without mawkishness."[5]

Howard has, however, an arrogance on stage which can bring him to grief; Peter Thomson noted "a tendency to play off rather than with other actors".[6] This same arrogance is also capable of being harnessed to good effect, witness his earlier Achilles and a fine Coriolanus in 1977. The ability to distance from the character which is detectable in his work may well have been what Nunn was looking for in his Hamlet. Nunn outlined his views in his first talk to the company in rehearsal:

> "Hamlet [is] a study in alienation: the gulf between thought and will, will and performance. By the players Hamlet the thinker is taught how to feel and perform to bridge the gap between inner and outer worlds in action."[7]

The play within the play was central to Nunn's thinking. Hamlet's examination of the players' craft in the "rogue and peasant slave" soliloquy became a pivotal point in the production. He would go on to use the conclusions he reached in this soliloquy to shape his future actions. The animated rendering of the Pyrrhus speech had been prelude to the assumption of theatrical disguise. Thus he will don a monk's robe to try to escape from Claudius, and deliver "'Tis now the very witching time of night" in the manner of a ham actor. This preoccupation with "performance" is tied in with the theme of madness and Nunn sees the whole of the central section of the play as being concerned with "the shifts between real madness and performed madness".[8] Nunn divided the play so that the intervals came after Act I and Act IV Scene 4, a decision which Peter Thomson

regarded as important:

> "The chosen intervals defined the interpretation. Act I carried Hamlet to breaking-point in confrontation with his father's ghost, this Act II contains the 'shifts between real madness and performed madness' for which the players provide a major impetus, and this Act III completes the story after Hamlet has recovered his self-control."[9]

Although the critics showed interest in Nunn's shaping of the play, they were rather less tolerant of his cutting of the text. He favoured internal cuts, many of which were lines elaborating meaning, rather than the removal of entire scenes. He is also given to the occasional short paraphrase to replace a longer cut, whilst other cuts may be regarded as having a more direct bearing on the director's interpretation of the play.

Robert Speaight was particularly critical of Nunn's removal of elaborations. He argued that, particularly in the well-known passages, the director cannot ride roughshod over what the audience expects to hear. He cites the loss of "unhouseled, disappointed, unaneled" in the Ghost's speech (Act I Scene 5 line 77) to illustrate his point. One might also add the cutting from Hamlet's speech, "O all you host of heaven!", the lines:

> "Within the book and volume of my brain,
> Unmixed with baser matter - yes by heaven!"
>
> (Act I Scene 5 lines 103-104)

Similarly Ophelia loses from her speech following the Nunnery Scene the lines:

> "The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword"

and:

> "The glass of fashion and the mould of form"

together with:

> "And I of ladies most deject and wretched
> That sucked the honey of his music vows,"

Such cuts as these gave rise to Robert Speaight's observation that "Shakespeare's repetitions and elaborations of a thought or a theme are as much a part of his method as similar repetitions and elaborations in music, and they resist amputation".[10]

Hamlet's soliloquies are largely untouched, the first and last both losing three lines (Act I Scene 2 lines 154-155 and Act IV Scene 4 lines 48-50). Of the six post-war directors of Hamlet at Stratford, Nunn was the only one to make cuts in the soliloquies, with the exception of Michael Benthall in 1948 who removed one line from the "rogue and peasant slave" soliloquy,

"Plucks off my beard and blows it in my face"

(Act II Scene 2 line 576)

This was presumably to save embarrassment to his clean shaven actors. There is a suggestion, however, that Nunn was not insensitve to the problem of cutting the soliloquies, for in Hamlet's "How all occasions do inform against me", the three lines beginning "Rightly to be great" (lines 53b-56a) were initially cut and then reinstated.

Claudius's soliloquy fares less well with all six directors. Only Peter Wood leavesit intact, Nunn again heading the field in the number of lines cut (ten in all). On the other hand Gertrude's Willow speech is played in full on each occasion, save in 1970, when Nunn removes three lines (Act IV Scene 7 lines 177-179). Conversely, the prompt book suggests that in preparing his text, Nunn originally retained in Act III Scene 3 Rosencrantz's discourse on monarchy which begins "The cess of majesty ..." (lines 15b-23), only to cut it at a later stage. The inference would appear to be that Nunn's cutting of elaborations is not automatic.

It does, however, seem perverse to cut the final rhyming couplet from a scene. This would seem to run contrary to his views on the

unity of each scene, expressed when discussing lighting with Peter Ansorge: "each scene doesn't just flow into the next, it must exist in its own dimension."[11] Act III Scene 2, for instance, regrettably loses its final lines:

> "How in my words somever she be shent
> To give them seals never, my soul, consent!"

Nunn's liking for paraphrase is even more questionable. It is, however, possible to appreciate, even if one is not prepared to condone, the paraphrase which expresses a tortuous passage more economically. Thus Horatio's explanation of the background to the Norwegian Wars (Act I Scene 1 lines 82-96) is paraphrased:

> "Now certain lands from Fortinbras of Norway
> Who, being dead, his son young Fortinbras"

Similarly, Hamlet's admonition to Horatio and the assembled company to keep counsel regarding the Ghost (Act I Scene 2 lines 244-250) is reduced to one line:

> "Conceal this sight within your silence still".

One may accord the same understanding to the paraphrase which reduces Laertes's explanation of the effects of the poison with which he will annoint his sword to a half line, "nothing can save from death", where Shakespeare uses six (Act IV Scene 7 lines 142b-147a). It is, however, difficult to justify the re-writing of a line such as occurs at the beginning of Act IV Scene 7 where line 4:

> "That he which hath your noble father slaim"

becomes:

> "That he who killed your father"

The amended line offers no clarification - none is needed - and simply destroys the scansion.

Nunn, together with Peter Barnes, was castigated by Bernard Levin in 1977 for his readiness to improve on the text.[12] Director and

"adapter" produced a variety of textual changes in Ben Jonson's play The Alchemist which was presented at The Other Place during the 1977 season. Nunn defended the changes on the grounds that a modern audience would find the original difficult to understand. The argument was not altogether convincing. The re-writing of Act IV Scene 7 line 4 raises the same doubts.

A further group of textual variations may be regarded as interpretative in that they have a direct bearing on Nunn's view of the play. For instance, in a production which stresses Hamlet's madness, the word "sanity" is preferred to "safety" (Signet edition) so that Laertes is made to warn Ophelia that on Hamlet's choice of wife depends:

> "The sanity and health of this whole state"

In Act V Scene I line 157, the First Gravedigger reduces his service by five years to accommodate a younger Hamlet and the line now reads:

> "I have been sexton here man and boy for twenty five years."

The alteration in the time scale necessitates a change in line 167 from

> "this skull have lien you i' th' earth three and twenty years"

to "some dozen years". Although Howard himself was thirty three when he played the part, the intention appears to have been to project a young Hamlet. Ronald Bryden, observing Howard in rehearsal, commented:

> "His performance grew amazingly younger. It was as if he was stripping from himself not only years, but the defensive armour, the competence to hide the child in the adult".[13]

Although the production is not preoccupied with the political aspect of the play, Nunn retains reference to the Norwegian wars, albeit in a paraphrase of Horatio's lines (Act I Scene 1 lines 82-96). This is compensated by allowing Claudius in Act I Scene 2 to deal more fully with the subject (he loses only six lines from the twenty four

on this theme). Consequently Voltimand's speech when the ambassadors return (Act II Scene 2 lines 60-80) is heavily cut, retaining no more than four lines.

The occasional cut is designed to give greater immediacy to the action. Act III Scene 1 line 170b-172 reads:

> "which for to prevent,
> I have in quick determination
> Thus set it down: he shall with speed to England".

The cutting and insertion of the word "it" enables the audience to see Claudius in the act of devising the plan, and the version as performed reads:

> "which for to prevent,
> I have it: he shall with speed to England".

In leading up to the climax of the play, Nunn holds to his principle of internal cuts, so that Hamlet's account of the voyage to England is fairly full, as is his encounter with Osric (Robert Speaight felt he could have spared more of this scene, since it had the affect of slowing down the production). Nunn does not allow events to linger, however, following the death of Hamlet, being unique among the six directors in cutting three lines from Fortinbras's final speech.

In general, Nunn's cuts and textual variations raised a considerable amount of adverse critical comment. A certain confusion appears to have been added by the fact that Howard was rather unsure of his lines on the first night, giving rise to some speculations as to whether the actor or the director was to blame for certain omissions.

The text used for the production was The Signet Classic Shakespeare from which a total of 1,027 lines were cut, the highest number by thirty in the six post-war productions, leaving a playing version of 2,803. The production opened at Stratford on the 8th June, 1970 and played for sixty two performances. It was

subsequently taken to The Roundhouse in London where it played for one night on the 8th December as a Theatre-Go-Round production.

Opinion was sharply divided as to the effectiveness of the opening scene in this production. The white-walled set did not adapt easily to the shadowy battlements of Elsinore at midnight, though the white fur-trimmed costumes, suggesting an arctic cold, presented little problem. Three giant hammer blows - an amplified borrowing from the French theatre - opened the play; one critic suggested they were " a symbol of the heavy emotional assault to come".[14] The action begins with Barnardo entering through the upstage trap and shouting his first enquiry of Francisco, who is off-stage. The counter-challenge is delivered as Francisco enters. B.A. Young was one critic who saw unusual merit in this opening scene:

> "These terse, nervous interchanges of the sentries on the battlements, so often barked out with little real appreciation of their sense, are given their full meaning, line by line."[15]

The Ghost was solid and terrestrial. It entered upstage and the movements of Marcellus, Barnardo and Horatio were towards rather than away from it. Robert Speaight argues that the effectiveness of the Ghost is in inverse ratio to its ghostliness and therefore, in principle, he approves of a substantial ghost. But this ghost "belonged more evidently to the world he was visiting than to ... purgatory".[16] Speaight goes on to suggest that the Ghost might be more profitably heard and not seen, and that a ghost located in the area of the forestage could perhaps solve the problem. The idea was not new. Tony Richardson in his 1976 production of Hamlet at The Roundhouse had tried it, with mixed success, and Sir John Gielgud also abandoned the idea of an actor appearing on the stage as the Ghost

in his 1964 production on Broadway, the visual effect being created by a shaft of light.[17]

The second appearance of the Ghost up right again draws the watchers to him. Horatio stops it in its tracks ("Stay, illusion!"). At the cock crow it returns upstage and as it passes the open trap, the door snaps shut as though signalling its departure to the nether regions. Nunn, in explaining his conception of the chamber setting had equated the area beneath the stage with "hell, the unknown, the darkly occult".[18]

The shape of the set, an oblong box, influences the grouping throughout the production, especially in the scenes where the full court is onstage. Act I Scene 2 finds the court strung out across the width of the stage, with Claudius and Gertrude entering to a position slightly downstage of the rest. Claudius addresses the audience as part of the court. Irving Wardle interpreted the effect:

> "They line up downstage like a newly installed junta facing a rebellious crowd as Claudius delivers his opening speech in the style of a bullying demagogue."[19]

The technique of involving the audience in the action of the play is reminiscent of that used by Peter Hall in 1965, where David Warner was made to address his soliloquies out front. Harold Hobson, however, detected echoes of Nunn's own inspiration from an earlier production:

> "The stage picture and the smell of corruption strongly recall Mr Nunn's treatment of The Revenger's Tragedy."[20]

The two productions shared a common insistence on visual impact, the black and white costumes of Nunn's Hamlet recalling the black and silver of The Revenger's Tragedy. The critic of The Times, reviewing the production of the Tourneur play had written of "the courtiers uniformly clad in black and silver as if to remind us that Vendice is fighting a corporate evil rather than isolated individuals"(6 October 1966)

The first appearance of the full court in Nunn's 1970 Hamlet makes it clear that the costume is to have a bearing on the interpretation of the play. Nunn, however, rejected the inference that the colour scheme was symbolic or yet a kind of chessboard imagery of black kings and white queens. He was looking for "something believably Scandinavian in terms of climate and practicability. I also wanted to show that the court was in celebration rather than in mourning." But he did admit that he was aiming "to crystallise appearances so that what people represent is at least part of what they look like".[21] If we are to follow this lead, Hamlet's appearance at the outset indicates a state of some deterioration:

> "The suit is not only old, it is stained by use and wrongly or inadequately buttoned. Hamlet's hair is long and uncombed."[22]

Hamlet's "inky cloak" is thrown into unusual relief by the surrounding white of costume and set. The effect is further underlined by Nunn's bringing on the court in a blackout so that the lights go up on a tableau in which the only moving figure is that of Hamlet, who enters upstage. He pauses before moving to take up his position behind the Queen's empty chair. The court then breaks into life as the King and Queen enter and bow as they move downstage.

David Waller's Claudius was a harsh, unkingly figure: "a hard-drinking vulgarian who has thugged his way to power and now ostentatiously fondles Gertrude in full view of the court."[23] His opening speech is barked out in formal phrases before a puppet-like court. His justification for marrying Gertrude draws cheers from the court and at the conclusion of this passage, Claudius moves back upstage to consult the map laid out on a table. The letters to Norway are also set there and Cornelius and Voltimand acknowledge Gertrude with a

half-bow as they move in to kneel to Claudius. Dismissed, they retire upstage to exit later with the court.

Permission is given for Laertes's departure to Paris, which occasions Laertes's kissing Claudius's hand and Ophelia's curtsey. Claudius turns his attention to Hamlet. Melancholy sits deeply on this prince and the applause which greets the King's announcement of Hamlet as his successor is almost an attempt to lift his depression. A look of antagonism is exchanged between Claudius and Hamlet as the King tries to persuade him to stay at court and Claudius's line, "This gentle and unforced accord of Hamlet", assumes a hollow irony. Nunn is fond of using props to give a point of focus to a scene (witness the box of toys at the opening of his 1969 production of The Winter's Tale) and throughout this first court scene, a globe stands upstage, reminding the audience of the wider political issues beyond the Danish court. As he leaves, Claudius spins the globe.

Hamlet's first soliloquy assumes a particular importance for it is here that Howard reveals the key to his interpretation: it is the effect of events on Hamlet's mind which will unbalance him. At this stage, his mother's second marriage obsesses him. Peter Thomson describes his state as follows:

> "From the outset this Hamlet is vulnerable to nothing but his own thoughts. He is unthreatened by the court bully Claudius ... or the endearingly ... bumbling Polonius; ... but he is at the mercy of memories that he tries vainly to shut out of his head. The stress falls on "Heaven and earth! Must I remember?"[24]

In the Laertes farewell scene, it is not unusual to find the director foreshadowing future events: fencing foils have been used to establish Laertes's skills prior to the duel and flowers as a prelude to Ophelia's madness. Nunn chooses Ophelia's singing. At the beginning of the scene she moves to a music stool where she takes

up her lute and starts to practise a song. Laertes joins her and, seating himself on a second stool, takes up another instrument and begins to instruct her. They join together in playing and singing. The business will be repeated in Ophelia's mad scene as Laertes tries to penetrate her consciousness. As the scene progresses, Ophelia becomes more and more petulant with her brother, sticking out her tongue at him as Polonius harangues his son. The relationship between Ophelia and Laertes stresses their childishness and Robert Speaight was moved to regret the absence of "firebrand and folly and conventional sentiment" in Laertes.[25]

Sebastian Shaw, whose Polonius received unanimous praise from the critics, portrayed, in the view of B.A. Young, "a kind of ageing Hindenburg, the shadow of a strong man decaying into senility".[26] This, he felt, went some way to explaining his later heartless treatment of his daughter and the spying on his son, that is to say, he was too old to know what he was doing - a far cry from the scheming politician of the 1965 production. He uses a card to jog his memory for the "few precepts", smiling with an old man's relish at his own witticisms. There is, however, warmth in the embrace with which he delivers his blessing to Laertes, who in turn embraces Ophelia before leaving.

A bare stage indicates a return to the battlements and Hamlet, Horatio and Marcellus advance downstage where they position themselves in a straight line. Considerable tension is generated as they await the appearance of the Ghost. The sound of drums and trumpets signalling the King's wassail causes the waiting figures to start and as the noise subsides, a distant snatch of drunken song is heard. Horatio laughs nervously.

Nunn played down the impact of the Ghost in contrast with the mobile giant-figure of 1965, his only concession to the unearthly being a green follow-spot. Hamlet's attempts to pursue the beckoning figure are forestalled by his friends and Nunn warns of the violence to come when Hamlet produces a knife and threatens his captors:

"By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets me!"

The same physical menace will appear in Hamlet's confrontation with Claudius after the death of Polonius.

The Ghost enters down right followed by Hamlet and turns to face him. Hamlet moves towards the Ghost as if to offer comfort ("Alas poor ghost!"), but turns away apprehensively as the Ghost identifies itself. He kneels ("Haste me to know't"), prostrating himself as the Ghost expounds Gertrude's adultery. The Ghost comes to kneel at his side, bending solicitously over his son. His cry "O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible!" causes Hamlet to stretch out a hand towards him. The Ghost recoils, but as he leaves, extends a hand to Hamlet which Hamlet vainly tried to grasp. Hamlet, now on his knees, plunges his dagger into the ground and before this improvised cross imparts the significance of a vow to his cry "Remember thee?" It also underlines the fact that the burden of accumulating evil will weigh heavily on the mind of this Hamlet. The swearing scene ends with Hamlet, Horatio and Marcellus touching hands as the final vow of silence is sworn and Hamlet takes each one by the arm to lead him out.

At this point, a ten minute interval is taken.

The second part of the play opens with the Reynaldo scene. The conference between Polonius and Reynaldo is interrupted by the

entrance of Ophelia who bursts in and runs between them. Her arrival, which occurs three lines earlier than usual, has the effect of bringing their discussion to a close, Polonius being forced to turn his attention towards his distressed daughter.

The lights go up on the second court scene with the characters already in position. Claudius and Gertrude are standing down left with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Osric, introduced early to the play, waits down left with another Lord. It is a small gathering, comprising those privy to the King's purpose in sending for Hamlet's fellow students. Throughout the scene, the sensual nature of the relationship between Claudius and Gertrude is underlined. Claudius seems much preoccupied with kissing and fondling the Queen, scarcely heeding the ramblings of Polonius. This is the "bloat King" whom Hamlet will decry in the Closet scene.

Hamlet, whose entrance is timed so that he does not overhear the plot to use Ophelia in the Nunnery scene, encounters Polonius for their exchange, which J.C. Trewin described as "the fiercest in memory". The same harshness is apparent in his encounter with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. The bawdy laughter and careless squatting on the floor gives way to the dark depression of "I have of late, but wherefore I know not, lost all my mirth". Howard's emphasis in the line "there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so" falls heavily on the word "thinking", underlining the fact that it is his mental state which governs the way he sees the world. J.C. Trewin drew attention to another word which is singled out for emphasis:

> "Always one has wanted to hear a Hamlet's stress upon his summary of the glories of man, 'And yet to me, what is this quintessence of dust?' The word "quintessence" must be sought for. I have never known it emerge with such scorn as it does when Alan Howard speaks it."[27]

Mention of the players produces a startling change in Hamlet. He becomes animated, alert, ready to assume a role after the fashion of the players he is to welcome. "The lover shall not sigh gratis", he says, and with Guildenstern falls into a lover's pose. He will later act as audience to his own performance and deliver an ironic slow-handclap for his rendering of the Pyrrhus speech. It was suggested that this Hamlet was fascinated by the players because they offered feigned madness as a lively alternative to the real madness that threatens him. Irving Wardle noted that "with the arrival of the players he starts moving into a fever of exhileration that carries through the mounting ecstacy until after the murder of Polonius."[28]

The entrance of the Players, dragging a cart (which will later serve as a mobile stage) is given extra impact by their coloured costumes, which stand out against the blacks and whites of the rest. "We'll have a speech straight" is received with amused surprise by the players, who are already unpacking the cart under the direction of the First Player. Various properties are making their appearance: a mound (later to be used in "The Murder of Gonzago"), a wooden horse and a costume rail. The Player Queen puts down the duffle bag she carries and produces a playscript, which she hands to Hamlet so that he may look for the speech he is trying to recall. When the First Player takes over, he moves onto the mobile stage and is handed a sword. Polonius's "This is too long" sees Hamlet take the sword from the player and use it to illustrate his reply "It shall to the barber's with your beard". The First Player has signalled to the company to begin packing the cart as Hamlet draws him aside to discuss the coming performance.

Hamlet's involvement with the players is a more than usually important feature of this production. In the soliloquy which follows

their exit, he gives voice to the feelings which have been growing since they arrived. His preoccupation with theatre has often been underlined during this soliloquy by using theatrical props or items of costume left behind by the players. (Ian Bannen's getting into the costume trunk is an extreme example.) For Nunn the connections with theatre went deeper and influenced his total view of the play. The hobby horse which Howard used to illustrate

> "and all for nothing!
> For Hecuba!"

and the property sword used "to cleave the general ear" were no more than significant details. The true importance of this soliloquy to Nunn's production is to be found in its obsession with illusion and reality and the way in which Hamlet will fuse the two. Peter Thomson analyses it thus:

> "In coupling 'motive' and 'cue' Shakespeare is approaching the paradoxical centre of acting, the simultaneity of emotional involvement and technical remove. It is this mystery that most excites Hamlet's interest in the First Player and deepens the complex 'truth' of his own feigning."[29]

Ann Righter provides a further clarification:

> "In the tears shed by the first player for the suffering of Hecuba, he sees a judgement upon his own inaction, and he determines to employ the weapon of illusion to penetrate the tangle of appearances around him."[30]

Thus Hamlet will, after the performance before the court, mount the Players' deserted stage, don a monk's robe and deliver "'Tis now the very witching time of night" in the grand theatrical manner. Ronald Bryden refers to Hamlet's decision to play society's game, "deceive, smile and kill", a decision symbolised by the "white, brainwashed figure" which emerges from the bruising encounter with Claudius in Act IV Scene 3:

> "In such a reading, the key soliloquy is not the black and white alternative of 'To be or not to be'. It is 'O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!': the speech in which Hamlet, envying the Player King his painted passion, wrestles agonisingly with himself to separate imaginary, histrionic emotions from real ones, to dredge up from the depths of his being a true response to his mother's adultery, his father's murder."[31]

Nunn sets Act III Scene 1 in a chapel; rows of pews and a confessional occupy the stage. The religious theme has already been apparent in the crucifix, which Hamlet wears about his neck, and the sign of the cross he makes with the handle of his dagger ("O all you host of heaven!"). There is an irony in using a confessional to enable Claudius and Polonius to overhear Hamlet's abuse of Ophelia and the chapel setting in general heightens the impact of the Nunnery scene to something near blasphemy.

Four monks chanting plainsong open the scene as the court assembles. The constraints of the pews produce the familiar grouping of characters across the width of the stage. Gertrude, Claudius, Polonius, Guildenstern and Rosencrantz stretch across the front of the stage, while Ophelia remains upstage until she is brought forward for the encounter with Hamlet. The Queen's concern for Ophelia's fate is reflected in her planting a kiss on her cheek as she leaves. Polonius, architect of the plan, directs Ophelia to a particular seat in the pew. He then ushers Claudius into the confessional and shuts the door. Hamlet enters and moves downstage to kneel, from which position he delivers "To be or not to be". He rises on "who would fardels bear" (line 76), and as a movement from Ophelia distracts him, he moves upstage to sit with her in the pew, leaving an empty space between them. Ophelia returns his "remembrances" in a box, placing them on the vacant seat. With a child-like burst of self-pity, Hamlet sobs at the rejection embodied in her action. He bangs the box hard

PLATE XVI

"you jig, you amble, and you lisp"

Alan Howard and Helen Mirren in the Nunnery Scene.

against the back of the pew as he cries "Get thee to a nunnery", taking hold of Ophelia to drive the point home: "Go thy ways to a nunnery". As he bids her farewell, he moves behind the pew, seizing her throat as he taunts "you jig, you amble, and you lisp". Ophelia lets out a cry. Howard's demonic emphasis of "it hath made me mad" (line 150) gave point to Ophelia's subsequent reference to "sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh". The scene is physically violent; Peter Thomson observed:

> "Alan Howard was fine and frightening in this scene. His departure left Ophelia slumped on the pew like one recently raped."[32]

The audience was moved to sympathise strongly with Ophelia following this assault:

> "Beset on one hand by her father and brother, and on the other by Hamlet, bruised and universally bullied, her eyes, her face, her whole body are brimming with unshed tears. Miss Mirren is the centre of the play's affection."[33]

Her father and the King, emerging from the confessional, show scant regard for the battered Ophelia as they move down right to discuss the next stage of their plans. It is only the sight of the discarded prayer book which turns Polonius's mind to his daughter and the dismissive two lines seem more than usually heartless. The harsh treatment meted out in the Nunnery scene gives added point to the King's final line:

> "Madness in great ones must not unwatched go."

The pews and the confessional are struck in the black-out and replaced with the Players' cart, now curtained to form a booth stage. Act III Scene 2 opens with Hamlet conducting a rehearsal of The Dumb Show (Nunn will not follow Dover Wilson's view that the Players take Hamlet by surprise with The Dumb Show). Finding himself

already in the role of director, Hamlet moves naturally into his advice to the players. At a moment when the action freezes, he steps onto the front of the booth stage and begins "Speak the speech I pray you ...",crouching as he warms to his subject with the ease of one who is at home there.

The Players move behind the curtains to prepare for their performance and benches are brought on as the stage is made ready for the play. Hamlet helps to re-set the mound which has been used for rehearsal. The court is rather sparse (half a dozen extras support the main characters) and as they assemble, Horatio moves down right and Hamlet jumps up onto the stage. Polonius is brought up onto the stage for the exchange with Hamlet which is played in the style of a comedy routine; a round of applause greets Hamlet's delivery of the punch-line:

> "It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf there."

He accompanies the line with a mock stabbing of Polonius - a grim foreshadowing of the death to follow in the Closet scene.

Ophelia goes to sit on a bench, right centre, and Claudius and Gertrude sit to the left of the Players' stage. The court falls silent at the exchanges between Hamlet and Ophelia. Hamlet finally descends from the stage and moves to lie at Ophelia's feet, his head propped against her leg. Polonius settles himself on the bench down left and Rosencrantz on a cushion down right. The onstage orchestra, which will intermittently accompany the action, begins to play and The Dumb Show gets underway. The actors are masked and the impact is further heightened by the splash of colour made by their costumes. The Dumb Show, full of precise movement, was compared to Japanese Kabuki theatre. The King appeared to take in The Dumb Show, though

no obvious reaction was apparent. Ophelia's enquiry "What means this, my Lord?" intrudes on the end of the mime.

The three knocks ring out (repeating the convention which opened the play proper) and the Prologue addresses his lines to the King, who nods his assent for the performance to begin. The Player King and Queen make their entrance and as the Player King rests his head on the grassy mound, the Queen removes his crown. She kisses the recumbent figure as she leaves and Claudius rises to question Hamlet. The action resumes with Lucianus taking up the Player King's crown and Hamlet rises from his position near Ophelia and moves down centre where he kneels, facing upstage. This has the effect of further concentrating the attention on the booth stage. As Lucianus begins "Thoughts black, hands apt ...", Hamlet moves still closer in to the stage. The murderer kneels over the sleeping King, pours the poison into his ear and backs away. The Player King wakes and looks long and hard at the poisoner. It is at this point that Claudius's nerve cracks. He climbs onto the stage, tears the mask from the Player King's face and orders "Give o'er the play". This piece of business is a key to the director's conception of the play - the moment when reality intrudes upon illusion. Nunn interprets his intention:

> "the performance being enacted on the stage by the players turns into the real world for Claudius. He's drawn back to the space of the stage, to the playing out of a second rate melodrama in which he knows he has taken part as a leading character."[34]

The moment is a cue for Hamlet himself to assume the role of the actor. The court rises and a gentleman rushes to Claudius's aid. The stage clears, leaving Horatio up right watching Hamlet leap gleefully onto the booth stage and jam the property crown firmly on his head. The musicians, who have remained, catch Hamlet's eye and

he calls for music, executing a joyful dance as they play. Claudius, broken as much by the glint in Hamlet's eye as by the action of the play, has made a subdued exit. There is none of the controlled scorn which Brewster Mason's Claudius directed towards Hamlet in the 1965 production, but neither is there indecent haste. John Barber found it negative and inconsequential:

> "The Danish court even verges on dullness at times. I have rarely seen the play scene end with so unexciting a flurry and with the King's call for lights totally ignored."[35]

The arrival of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern ends Hamlet's high-spirited dance and brings him down from the stage. He welcomes Guildenstern with an ironic handshake and withdraws to the bench right centre. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern close in on him. The musicians, who are beginning to pack up their instruments, provide Hamlet with a diversion and he slips upstage to take a recorder. Emboldened by his plan, he approaches the uneasy Guildenstern who is made to perform on the pipe. His efforts produce a pathetic whistle, which gives rise to his irritable "But these cannot I command to any utt'rance of harmony". Hamlet's ascendancy over the King, his two minions and subsequently Polonius prompts him to a final performance on the Players' stage. He finds a discarded monk's habit, puts it on and performs "'Tis now the very witching time of night" in the manner of a ham actor. Not everyone was happy with this insistence on the theatrical. Irving Wardle felt that it reduced Hamlet's stature to present him as "an improvising actor" and he was led to complain: "There is no moment when he talks on level human terms or says anything straight".[36]

Act III Scene 3 is made to run on in unbroken sequence. The King and Queen are brought back, while Hamlet conceals himself behind

the curtains of the booth stage. He is thus able to overhear the King's plan to send him to England, which will give added significance to his later confrontation with Claudius. It does, however, produce one unresolved problem. Hamlet will also hear that Polonius is to be concealed behind the arras in his mother's closet.

Claudius, who has begun "O my offence is rank" seated in the throne from which he has watched the play, moves onto the Players' stage to complete the soliloquy. He kneels at the mound where the poisoner has so recently bent over the body of the sleeping King. Nunn gives the scene a final theatrical twist as Hamlet, clad in his monk's cowl and looking very much like the poisoner who has just advanced on the sleeping Player King, emerges from the curtains to stoop over the praying figure of Claudius, announcing "Now might I do it pat". B.A. Young in The Financial Times was not sufficiently distracted by the novelty of the interpretation to forgive Howard some poor verse speaking:

> "In trying to impose a pattern of inflexions on the verse he loses the meaning e.g. how can he stress a line like "This is hire and salary not revenge" with the final word thrown away at the botton of the compass?"
>
> (6 June 1970)

Booth stage and benches are struck and replaced with dressing table, chair and arras, an extra chair being placed up left; a bench remains down left. Mirror, comb and pictures of the two kings are set on the dressing table. There is no bed. Gertrude takes up her position in the dressing chair and, Polonius concealed, Hamlet enters. Gertrude busies herself with the mirror while Hamlet sits in the other chair. "You go not till I set you up a glass" sees Hamlet snatch the mirror from his mother's grasp and brutally thrust her head towards it. The violence of the action occasions her cry of

murder and Polonius's reaction. With the same bitter impetus Hamlet rushes to the aperture between the rear screens and delivers through the arras a series of vicious stabs which rouses him to a pitch of physical ecstacy. It is an outbreak of the madness he has been keeping at bay. The death of Polonius, achieved more often than not with a random sword-thrust through the arras, was obviously of different significance here. There was no attempt to gain sympathy for a prince whose impetuous action had caused him to kill the wrong man. Nunn offered an explanation which appeared to exonerate Hamlet:

> "When he murders Polonius he doesn't know what he's doing, it's part of his play acting, his madness."[37]

As Hamlet lifts the arras and reveals the body, Gertrude moves in to embrace her son as though she too recognises that the storm has broken and that he is now in need of comfort. But the scene continues with violent intensity, Howard's voice rising to a high monotone in the more impassioned speeches. At the entrance of the Ghost, Hamlet kneels, while Gertrude, unseeing, approaches the spot where it stands. It leaves and Hamlet makes to follow, as if remembering his pursuit across the battlements. Gertrude retreats to the bench down left as she offers the explanation for his behaviour: "This is the very coinage of your brain!" Some critics felt that this was the point at which the over-insistence on a mad Hamlet came to grief, for Hamlet must reply:

> "Ecstacy!
> My pulse as yours doth temperately keep time
> And makes as healthful music."
>
> (lines 139-141)

Nunn's answer to this apparent inconsistency would appear to be that the distinction between real and feigned madness in the play is confused and it is this confusion which Nunn mirrors in the real and

illusory actions of the protagonists and the players.

It becomes apparent throughout the remainder of the play that Gertrude takes account of her son's request that she refrain from physical contact with Claudius. The fondling and kissing stop and the Queen becomes a hard and isolated figure whose experiences in this scene have left her chastened. In the short scene which follows it is obvious that Gertrude's attitude to her husband has changed; she regards him now with a mixture of horror and pity.

Throughout the production Nunn has presented a series of uncluttered stage pictures, relying for visual impact on figures against a white background. Thus there is no ring of flashing steel surrounding the fleeing prince as in the more elaborately staged productions. Hamlet is pursued across a bare stage by Rosencrantz and Guildenstern alone and his escape is simply and effectively achieved by a quick dart upstage.

A single cross is added to the stage for Act IV Scene 3. Placed up centre, it is sufficient to reintroduce the religious theme. Six monks, chanting, wind their way across the front of the stage as Claudius, flanked by Voltimand and Cornelius, enters up left. Osric and a gentleman are added to Hamlet's guard and as he comes in, the monks move upstage, resuming their chant. Hamlet, who has worn his monk's habit since the conclusion of the play scene, slips into their ranks and takes up the chant with them. Bewildered for a moment, his guards plunge in after him and in the resulting melee Hamlet is caught and brought before Claudius, pinioned between his captors. Claudius strips away the cowl, leaving him naked but for a pair of black trunks, and savagely punches his body. Claudius's patience is at an end; he resorts to physical violence.

The audience reacted with shock. The critics were divided in their interpretations, but most took up the religious symbolism. Hamlet was compared with the stripped and beaten Christ, "'crucified' between two courtiers".[38] It was seen as his punishment for killing Polonius. There was a suggestion of shriving in the action, and in the Fortinbras scene which follows, Hamlet's black garb is exchanged for pure white attire. Ronald Bryden attempted to analyse the business in terms of Nunn's view of the play:

> "In the black avenging cowl of Denmark's scourge and minister, Hamlet is playacting, unable to kill Claudius. Stripped and pummelled cruelly by his enemy after Polonius's murder, he is tamed, stunned into conformity. A white, brainwashed figure, he departs for England, but now the fighting in his soul is over. He will play society's game with it: deceive, smile and kill."[39]

Harold Hobson saw the incident as a kind of perverse fulfilment of Hamlet's quest and an obvious reference to Genet's The Balcony, with Hamlet "in the grip of erotic fancies":

> "Hamlet has not yet killed Claudius. But he has got what is necessary to the satisfaction of his needs: a bloody murder and the subjection of his body to physical torment. Thereafter to the end of the play, Hamlet is calm, joyous and fulfilled. His perversions ... have all been answered."[40]

The bare stage with its hard, white lighting has little difficulty in adapting to the outdoors for the Fortinbras scene. Hamlet's appearance in startling white costume signals a new phase of his development, and this transformation brings the second part of the play to an end.

The final part of the play opens with Ophelia's mad scene. An arras, a table, two chairs and a bench are set. Ophelia, followed by Osric and a gentleman moves quickly in from down left. The group passes rapidly upstage until Ophelia registers Gertrude's presence,

whereupon she returns to kiss the Queen's hand. This occasions her first question "Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark?" She cries out and points at Gertrude as she breaks into song, accompanying herself discordantly on the lute. From time to time she raps it hard to gain attention ("Pray you mark"), interrupting the Queen. She recoils as the King makes to touch the lute, hugging it to herself possessively. She whirls about the stage and as she leaves, Claudius despatches Horatio, Osric and the gentleman to follow her. She later returns and sits herself in the chair, while Laertes, overcome kneels at her feet. They recall the happy relationship of Act I Scene 3 as Laertes, in a vain attempt to communicate with her, joins again in her singing. She distributes the flowers in a fierce and deliberate fashion: rosemary and pansies to Laertes, columbines to Cornelius, rue for the King and a daisy for the Queen. As Glenda Jackson had done in 1965, Helen Mirren establishes the madness by an imperious disregard of the company, but, in addition, she contrives to counter-point the harshness with a touching melancholy. Her madness was described as having "a delicate, frightening authority".[41] Robert Speaight took the opportunity to consider how actresses had re-assessed the role of Ophelia:

> "No part in Shakespeare has suffered more from the sentimental evasion of sexuality, and now that Freud has shown them the way actresses are tumbling over themselves to behave when they are mad in a way that they would never behave when they are sane ... One used to be able to predict a performance of Ophelia even before the curtain went up; now you never know what you are in for and that is all to the good."[42]

The furniture is struck for the letter scene and is replaced for Act IV Scene 7 by a table (on which stands a decanter and glasses), and two chairs. The arras remains, and the globe, which appeared in the opening court scene, is again set. Its presence now, as then, serves

as a reminder of the world beyond Denmark, and on this occasion of Hamlet's voyage to England. Following the rather static plotting scene, Nunn decided to cut Claudius's half-line which announces the Queen's arrival ("But stay, what noise?" Act IV Scene 7 line 161), together with the opening line and a half of Gertrude's first speech:

> "One woe doth treat upon another's heel,
> So fast they follow".

Thus in the pause which followed Claudius's line "Our purpose may hold there ...", the Queen, unanounced, delivers the news directly: "your sister's drowned, Laertes". A further pause is held while the news is absorbed and another before Laertes asks "Where?". The Queen again waits before replying "There is a willow ...". This studied introduction is prelude to a simple delivery of the speech, devoid of gesture and full of grieving. Laertes exits quickly to shed private tears and Claudius goes out down left, followed at a distance by the Queen.

The Gravedigger and his assistant emerge from the grave trap to open Act V. They seat themselves on the upstage edge and indulge in a slapstick routine to illustrate the quibble of the drowning man. The First Gravedigger indicates the grave with his knife as he begins "Here lies the water". He cheekily cuts a piece of cheese from his assistant's lump to represent the man and places it on the edge of the grave. To illustrate the man going to the water, he pushes the cheese into the grave. He then cuts a second piece of cheese and again places it on the grave's edge and since the argument is now reversed, he bends to scoop up water from the grave and pour it over the cheese. To emphasise his point, he opens his bottle of wine which duly sprays into his assistant's face. The joke over, he

disappears into the grave to begin digging. He is soon back again, hauling himself onto the grave's edge in outrage as he asks "What, art a heathen?" (line 35). He continues to pop up and down in the grave until his assistant goes to replenish the liquor. The visual humour is kept going as the Gravedigger sings the first verse of his song unseen in the grave and at the end of the verse a skull appears, seemingly unaided, to perch on the grave's edge. Hamlet, still clad in white, has entered up left with Horatio and positioned himself just above the grave. The skull, moved by the unseen hand of the Gravedigger knocks itself on the grave's edge to get rid of the earth, occasioning Hamlet's observation "how the knave jowls it to the ground" (line 76). At the conclusion of the second verse of the Gravedigger's song the business is repeated. Another skull appears and is knocked on the ground as Hamlet ventures "Why may not that be the skull of a lawyer?" (lines 95-96). He finally approaches the grave to address the unseen Gravedigger who emerges to begin his equivocation with the prince. When Hamlet, overpowered by the smell, finally puts down the skulls, the Gravedigger nonchalantly picks them up and takes them out with him

The funeral procession enters up right and winds its way down to the grave. Laertes, together with the King and Queen stand to the left of it. The court, in mourning black, is in stark contrast to the white-clad figure of Hamlet, a reverse of the opening scenes. The Gravediggers remove the planks and four bearers lower the body on ropes into the grave. The First Gravedigger makes an attempt to fill it in, but Laertes stops him and lowers himself into the grave to embrace his dead sister. The fight between Hamlet and Laertes takes place at the side of the grave, Laertes having leapt out to

meet Hamlet at the sound of his voice. In the ensuing struggle Hamlet throws Laertes downstage and the fighting continues until Osric and a gentleman restrain Laertes while Hamlet is pushed away unceremoniously by Horatio. Richard David writing on the subject of this fight feels that directors are wrong to remove it from the grave:

> "The wrestling in the grave of Ophelia is, I believe, one of Shakespeare's deliberately horrific visual effects, as crucial to the action as the blinding of Gloucester or the killing of young Macduff."[43]

Hamlet does, however, find his way into the grave to declare "I loved Ophelia" (line 263) and hold the body in his arms. This seems only to invigorate him for a further attack on Laertes and as he shouts "I'll rant as well as thou" (line 278), he releases the body and jumps out of the grave to confront Laertes once more. The Queen's cry "This is mere madness" is given extra force, not only by the ferocity of the scene but by the emphasis the production has placed on a mad Hamlet. He finally breaks between Claudius and Cornelius and rushes out up right, with Horatio following at the King's bidding. There is a general exit up left as Claudius draws Laertes momentarily to one side before leaving himself at the down right exit. Gertrude and Laertes follow him and the Gravedigger is left wandering towards the grave with his spade.

Nunn establishes a different location by bringing in Hamlet and Horatio from the upstage trap to open Act V Scene 2. They sit on a long stone seat which has been placed down right, as Hamlet recounts the details of his voyage to England. The mood is relaxed and Hamlet drinks from a bottle which Horatio carries. He stretches himself out on the seat, as he speaks with regret of his attack on Laertes, Horatio now crouching at his side. Osric also appears from the upstage trap and places himself between them. The ensuing scene is

light-hearted, Hamlet treating Osric with what one critic termed "eupheuistic courtesy".[44]

The court makes its entrance, Claudius moving down left with Laertes and Gertrude. Nunn explains that at this point in the play Hamlet's "performances" have come to an end; he instances the sincerity of his speech asking Laertes's forgiveness and talks of Hamlet's having come through a crisis. Laertes's reply:

> "I do receive your offered love like love,
> And will not wrong it"
>
> (lines 249-250)

rings with a new irony, and one which is underlined by having the assembled court applaud Laertes's apparent generosity. Hamlet embraces his mother before taking a foil from Osric and, the combatants equipped, Claudius bears down on Hamlet to ask "You know the wager?" (line 258). The set throughout has been sparsely furnished and Nunn, wishing to leave the final scene unencumbered, is forced to cut the words "upon that table" from Claudius's line 265, which now reads simply "set me the stoup of wine". One stoup suffices.

The duel, "finely and gracefully fought",[45] earns applause from the court at the conclusion of each bout. When Hamlet is scratched by the poisoned sword, the courtiers gather round in concern as he retreats downstage. Hamlet now begins to fight in earnest before delivering the fatal blow to Laertes. The Queen staggers down centre and, with a touching irony, Hamlet offers her the poisoned cup as he tries to prevent her swooning. She pushes it aside in an attempt to warn of its deadly contents ("No, no, the drink, the drink ..." line 307) as she dies. Claudius goes to kneel beside the body and it is here that Hamlet approaches the King and flicks his ear with the

poisoned sword. The business recalls Old Hamlet's death at the hands of his brother and Hamlet, who could not kill Claudius at prayer, with a fine irony delivers the fatal thrust as Claudius prays over the body of his dead Queen. It is as if Claudius is now prepared to die, for he drinks voluntarily from the poisoned cup which Hamlet offers. The same mood of preparedness attends the death of Hamlet, who seems to see in it the consummation he has been seeking.

Nunn deliberately avoids the heavy ending to the play which Hall had used - the battering at doors, the entry of an army - and chooses instead to make it a private moment. There are few courtiers to watch Hamlet die and Fortinbras is attended by a single captain. The action concludes with the firing of three shots from a cannon, echoing the three knocks which opened the play.

Hamlet, it may be argued, has always held a mirror up to nature, but since Peter Hall's 1965 production, critics have usually looked for a more specific reflection of the age. By 1970, student protest and the fashionable iconoclasm of the sixties had become an established fact of life. Drugs and drop-outs had added themselves to the collective consciousness. Predictably, therefore, the notices for this Hamlet include their crop of contemporary references:

> "It is not surprising, perhaps, that Alan Howard's Hamlet - the first of the new decade - should be the prototypical student rebel: longhaired, a bit scruffy, sitting naturally on the floor, and blowing raspberries. He likes dressing up, especially, if it helps reduce a sombre occasion to the level of farce ... He treats his girlfriend pretty abominably and she becomes the willing receptacle for his neuroses."
>
> (Frank Marcus, The Sunday Telegraph, 7 June 1970)

> "a princeling whose wild variations of mood point to over-indulgence in halucogenic drugs."
>
> (Jeremy Kingston, Punch, 15 June 1970).

Irving Wardle in The Times took a more measured view of the production's twentieth century allusions:

> "By degrees, two key points ... emerge: the play's blood-soaked roots in the tradition of revenge drama, and Eliot's famous complaint that Hamlet's emotion is in excess of the given circumstances."
>
> (5 June 1970).

There is the implication in John Barber's review for The Daily Telegraph that directors have often used the play for idiosyncratic interpretations and he commends Nunn's production as "unusually lacking in caprice" (5 June 1970). J.C. Trewin, in a balanced appraisal of the production for The Birmingham Post, suggested that, whatever its shortcomings,

> "one must recognise the consistency, honesty, and theatrical impact of Trevor Nunn's production on an uncluttered stage, and the imagination with which Alan Howard has responded to the challenge."
>
> (5 June 1970).

Howard's Hamlet was, as always, much analysed. His impact on the younger generation was not commensurate with Warner's - that generation, now more secure in its own identity, was perhaps less in need of a rallying point - but neither did it offend the older generation, which was relieved to find a Hamlet who did not mangle the verse. The consensus of opinion afforded him qualified approval. Peter Thomson:

> "His voice is neither strong not resonant, but surprises by its range and suppleness, his charisma is of the matinee idol kind ... Not a great Hamlet, but not a negligible one."[46]

David Waller's Claudius was well enough liked - "a brutal sensualist",[47] "sottish, bull-like ... given to switching on a diplomatic smile at tricky moments",[48] and Brenda Bruce's Gertrude

was "the conventional lachrymose Queen".[49] The critics were unanimous in liking Sebastian Shaw's Polonius, though they were less happy with his son. They detected an effete quality in Christopher Gable's Laertes, "lisping like a cavalry subaltern",[50] and in the normally stalwart Horatio: "This man is usually presented as the paragon of faithfulness and honour. At Stratford he is deliberately shown as a lisping fool".[51] Ophelia fared better. The critics spoke of the pathos and unexpectedness of the performance: "Helen Mirren added yet another original Ophelia to the impressive catalogue of recent years."[52]

The production reflected its director. Peter Thomson wrote of him:

> "Trevor Nunn is a thoughtful director who likes to use his intelligence responsibly. Like John Barton he persuades an audience that he has done nothing he could not explain."[53]

The same critic offered his assessment of the season of which Hamlet had formed a part and, by implication, of Nunn's early impact on The Royal Shakespeare Company:

> "The 1970 season has left all roads open. Trevor Nunn's decision has been not to decide. Each of the first seven plays had a different director; there was no evident linking of the repertoire; there were as many designers as directors; no clear message for the seventies emerged ... There is no doubt, nor need there be any regret, that The Royal Shakespeare Company in 1970 continues to accommodate more ideas than it defines."[54]

Nunn was proceeding with caution and avoiding radical change. Perhaps his major contribution has since been to introduce the concept of small studio Theatre to balance the work of the main house - a development which in the budget-conscious seventies has had more to recommend it than theatrical virtues alone. Directors and actors have used The Other Place at Stratford and latterly The Warehouse in

London to explore new concepts of playing the classics and of exposing actors in a classical company to regular contact with modern plays. It came as no surprise that the other major company, The National Theatre, should include in its building a small auditorium, The Cottesloe, and that the man chosen to be the new director of The National Theatre should be the architect of The Royal Shakespeare Company, Nunn's sometime mentor, Sir Peter Hall.

CONCLUSION

> "There is never an ideal production of Hamlet.
> Any interpretation must limit."[1]

Peter Hall's statement about Hamlet illustrates a more general truth in the theatre. The act of mounting a play involves decisions which in turn close other doors. The nature of the play in performance is not to discuss but to define and with a play that has generated so much discussion, any production will disappoint in some measure.

The preparation of the text is shown to be of particular importance in Hamlet. Because of the play's length, productions using the complete text are rare and the director will already have made several interpretative decisions before he considers his staging, by the lines he has chosen to cut and the readings he has preferred. There is undoubtedly a danger of upsetting the play's balance by this re-shaping and direcors have latterly come to regard the internal cut as preferable to the removal of entire scenes. However, there is still a danger that the balance of a speech will be disturbed and Robert Speaight criticised Nunn, with some justification, for cuts within the play's well-known passages. Neither can repetitions and elaborations be automatically dismissed. Polonius, for instance, must be allowed to prevaricate if his character is to emerge and the critics were quick to question Hall's cutting of some of Polonius's lines to suit the sharp, experienced politician of the 1965 production. The same director was again accused of manipulative cutting of Horatio's lines in order to present a Hamlet standing more obviously alone, though, as Stanley Wells pointed out, the very presence of Horatio - "who was always on stage when he should have been" - was defence against this accusation. Perhaps the

most serious questions were raised by Nunn's liking for paraphrase. Whilst this often proved an economical way of transmitting certain factual information (the background to the Norwegian wars suffers little from Nunn's two-line exposition), it seems to have led the director into some unnecessary alterations.

There are certain sections of the text which readily lend themselves to cutting. The first appearance of the Ghost is rightly seen to hold more dramatic interest at the opening of the play than details of the wars with Norway, and most directors feel that this passage is, at least in part, expendable (Wood's decision to retain references to Young Fortinbras seems sensible, since he will make an appearance later in the play). Similar reasons govern the cutting in Act V Scene 2, where the demands of the approaching duel and climax to the tragedy cause directors not to allow Hamlet to lose the impetus by an over-lengthy explanation of his sea-voyage.

Two directors, Benthall and Wood, transpose the plotting between Claudius and Laertes to follow the burial of Ophelia, a move which, though it gains something from its juxtaposition to Laertes's fight with Hamlet, causes problems later when events leading up to Gertrude's announcement of Ophelia's death are uncomfortably compressed.

Hamlet's soliloquies are generally left intact, Nunn being the only director to remove any significant number of lines, six in all, and Wood alone follows the First Quarto in placing "To be or not to be" in Act II Scene 2.

In cutting a text, the director will usually need to reconcile the demands of twentieth century theatre with what he sees to be Shakespeare's intentions. In this respect, Richard David regards the director as an editor with special responsibilities to the text:

> "The line between what assists Shakespeare and what crosses his intentions is very fine ... Success or failure will depend on the exercise of a delicate judgement, which the director is increasingly expected to possess, for he is truly an editor of Shakespeare in very much the same sense as the scholar ... Indeed the director may be said to have the harder task of the two, for his text is three-dimensional and his exposition must be correspondingly complicated."[2]

A vital part of the director's "three-dimensional" exposition is the setting he chooses for the play. The six post-war productions at Stratford provide a useful insight into developments in staging over a period of twenty two years. Benthall's heavily pillared set in 1948 was solid and realistic but lacked the flexibility to cope with the play's exterior scenes and while Langham's "octagonal breadboard" seemed to offer freedom of staging, it left the actors exposed and vulnerable. Byam Shaw's ornate Elsinore was ostentatious and ultimately intrusive and not until Wood brought in Leslie Hurry as designer did the settings begin to take on an interpretative function as opposed simply to representing a location. Hurry's designs, echoing the Gothic pillars of the 1948 production, never attempted to match the realism of James Bailey's set, but sought instead both to accommodate and interpret the action. They paved the way for Hall's bravura use of setting in 1965, where revolving panels, figured backdrops and massive props, such as the cannon and seige engine, gave obvious expression to his view of the play. By 1970 symbol and set had combined to produce the white chamber setting, evoking the psychiatric clinic, with which Nunn directed the audience's attention firmly towards Hamlet's madness.

At the centre of the play stands the Prince - "Hamlet, the glorious enigma of the theatre ... the part for who knows how many vaulting ambitions."[3] Benthall in the forties recognised the

theatrical possibilities in double casting a rising and an established actor in the role, Redgrave in the fifties could not resist the opportunity to bring a more mature intelligence to bear, Warner in the sixties provided a rallying point for the young. Kenneth Tynan confidently stated that as a critic he took his prejudices with him into the theatre.[4] It is possible that every man takes his own conception of Hamlet, perhaps a part of himself, to the play. Of the six actors under consideration, those whose performances engaged the public had a personal magnetism allied to an ability "to hold as 'twere the mirror up to nature". Scofield's success, set against the more restrained reception for Helpmann, would seem to suggest that the public takes a young Hamlet more readily to heart. Reaction to Redgrave's Hamlet would appear to confirm this. His considered, polished performance failed to ignite his audiences - it was a performance out of its time. Badel proved that a talented actor can come to grief in the role, his performance was perhaps the most heavily criticised, and Bannen, though lacking something in individual flair, suffered the brunt of the criticism which, in the early sixties, greeted a modern actor breaking into the classical repertoire. He probably did more than has been recognised to pave the way for Warner's gangling, anti-Romantic Prince which produced such a sympathetic response from the young audiences four years later. Howard's Hamlet came at the beginning of a new decade and a new administration at Stratford. For many theatre-goers he reconciled the excesses of the new generation of young actors with the controlled technique apparent in the old.

In addition to interpreting the verse, the Shakespearian actor must satisfy his audience's desire to hear the verse well spoken and

in this area the critics of the six Hamlets have shown themselves more difficult to please. Even the vocally immaculate Redgrave was criticised for lapses of articulation in the soliloquies, and enthusiasm for Scofield's performance was tempered by a feeling that he sometimes sacrificed the poetry to the pace of his delivery. Badel's "monotonous tenor" was felt to be constricting to his verse speaking, but it was against the two Hamlets of the sixties that the critics launched their most forceful attack. Bannen's strained, hysterical delivery, roundly condemned, prompted Harold Hobson to sound the death knell of the mellifluous approach to Shakespeare and to suggest, prophetically, that the modern actor would resort to "gesture, bearing and new invention to compass his ends" (Sunday Times, 16 April 1961). Warner's "butchering" of the verse, his lack of modulation, his tendency to emphasise unimportant words - all confirmed the worst fears of those critics who valued the poetry in the play. There were others, however, who recognised that Warner was trying to explore different techniques of verse speaking to shock his audience into a new awareness of familiar lines. Thus the soliloquies were delivered directly at the audience as if to invite discussion of Hamlet's problems. There was no opportunity to sit back and admire or be lulled by the music of the verse; it was a vehicle for his thoughts and no more. Howard was welcomed with some relief. His verse speaking was intelligent, supple and well modulated, having proper regard for structure and sound. Howard went some way to restoring the balance.

If, as Hall suggests, each age must re-define its attitude to Hamlet, then in looking for an ideal production of the play we are chasing shadows. What Hall has said of the play, J.C. Trewin echoes of the Prince. In an article for The Birmingham Post entitled

In search of Hamlet, Trewin suggests that each actor will contribute something of his own, but that the complete Hamlet remains elusive:

> "The ideal performance must be a mosaic, a scene from this actor, a speech from another ... Yet there is no Hamlet of which we can say, 'This is perfection; this is the man'."[5]

LIST OF APPENDICES

Cuts and Textual Variations

In the following tables, all references have been standardised to The New Shakespeare Hamlet, edited by John Dover Wilson (London 1969). Cuts, Textual Variations and Transpositions are listed as they occur in the text and marked with the letters C. V. and T. respectively. The letters a. and b. are used to indicate the first and second parts of a line, and occasionally letter c. denotes a third part.

A prompt book sometimes deletes a word or phrase which the edition used for the production has in common with the standard text. Such instances are marked with an asterisk. When a change is made which brings the production text into line with the standard text a double asterisk is used.

With all textual variations, the words as they occur in the prompt book are recorded first and the word or words they replace in the standard text are included in a bracket.

A prompt book sometimes shows evidence of an erased deletion of a line or lines of text, suggesting that a cut was originally made and later reinstated. Such instances are marked R.C. (Reinstated Cut).

The 1948 Production

The text used is The Temple Shakespeare, edited by Israel Gollancz. (London, 1903).

Act I

Scene 1

V. 1.43 it (a')
C. 1.62-63
C. 1.70-107
C. 1.109-111
C. 1.117-125
C. 1.135-138
C. 1.162-163
C. 1.172-173
V. 1.175 conveniently (convenient)

Act I Scene 2

C. 1.21
V. 1.33 this (and)*
C. 1.34-41
V. 1.67 sun (son)
C. 1.79-82
V. 1.92 persevere (persever)
C. 1.98-106a
V. 1.129 solid (sullied)
V. 1.186 a' (he)
V. 1.187 a' (he)
V. 1.198 vast (waste)
C. 1.202b-206a
V. 1.213 watch'd (watch)
C. 1.230b
V. 1.243 warrant (war'nt)
V. 1.249 whatsoever (whatsomever)
V. 1.255 Omit brackets around 'in arms'

Act I Scene 3

C. 1.11-16a
C. 1.16b But
V. 1.21 Safety (Sanity)
C. 1.22-23
C. 1.33-42
V. 1.49 whilst (whiles)
V. 1.74 Are (Or)
C. 1.94-97
C. 1.108-109
C. 1.115b-120a
C. 1.126b-131a
V. 1.136 at end of line: Polonius: 'Ah'

Act I Scene 4

V. 1.33 Their (His)
V. 1.36 eale (evil)
C. 1.37-38
C. 1.75-78

Act I Scene 5

C. 1.44-45a
C. 1.50b-57
V. 1.84 howsoever (howsomever)
V. 1.96 while (whiles)
C. 1.159 omitted from The Temple Edition
V. 1.179 this not to do (this do swear)
V. The Temple Edition adds the word 'swear' following 1.180

Act II

Scene 1

C. 1.1-71a

Act II Scene 2

V. 1.4a Add the following dialogue (Prompt Book):
Rosencrantz: My Lord.
Guildenstern: Sire.
Rosencrantz: Your Majesty.
C. 1.40-85a
C. 1.102-104
C. 1.129-139a
V. 1.139b well (no)
V. 1.146 repulsed (repelléd)
C. 1.153-155
V. 1.182 god (good)
V. 1.185 Insert 'not' after 'but'*
C. 1.264-267
V. 1.269 line given to Guildenstern alone. Rosencrantz adds "My Lord"
C. 1.289b-291a
V. 1.305-306 appears no other thing (appeareth nothing) than (but)
V. 1.308 faculty (faculties)
V. 1.324a of (on)
C. 1.324b-372
V. 1.392 O' (a)
V. 1.393 so (then)
C. 1.415-425
C. 1.429b-433 to end with the word 'ring'
V. 1.441 caviare (caviary)
C. 1.442 beginning with the word 'but' - 450a
V. 1.450b in it (in't)
V. 1.455 it is ('tis)
C. 1.458-467
V. 1.478 fells (falls)*

C. 1.487-496
V. 1.523 whether (whe'r)
V. 1.528 abstract (abstracts)
V. 1.552 be wi' ye (bye to you)
C. 1.576
V. 1.582 have (ha')
V. 1.591 scullion (stallion)
V. 1.592 brain (brains)
C. 1.592 hum
V. 1.601 he but (a' do)
V. 1.603 the (a)

Act III

Scene 1

V. 1.1 circumstance (conference)
C. 1.12-14a
C. 1.43b-44a R.C.
V. 1.72 despised (disprized)
V. 1.129 heaven and earth (earth and heaven)
V. 1.150 more marriages (mo marriage)

ACT III Scene 2

C. 1.24b-37a
V. 1.49 We will (Ay)
C. 1.57b-60a
V. 1.62 Punctuation: comma after 'distinguish'
V. 1.63 Hath (Sh' hath). Punctuation: colon after 'herself'
V. 1.67 Commingled (co-medled)
C. 1.129b-136
V. 1.137 What's (Belike this show imports)*
V. 1.138 Insert 'my Lord' after 'the play'
C. 1.141-146
C. 1.165-167
C. 1.180- That's
C. 1.187-209
C. 1.217-220
C. 1.248-251
V. 1.261 He (A') for his (for 's)
C. 1.275-285
C. 1.304-308
V. 1.401 soever (somever)

Act III Scene 3

V. 1.6 dangerous (near's)
V. 1.7 lunacies (brows)
C. 1.11-23
V. 1.26b given to Guildenstern. 'My Lord' given to Rosencrantz and inserted before 1.26b
C. 1.56-64a
V. 1.73 he is (a' is a-)

V. 1.79 O (Why) hire (bait)
V. 1.80 He (A')

Act III Scene 4

V. 1.1 He (A')
V. 1.6 warrant (war'nt)
C. 1.45b-51a
C. 1.71b-76a
C. 1.78-81a
C. 1.119-122a
C. 1.142b-144a
C. 1.152b-155
C. 1.161-165a
C. 1.167b R.C.
C. 1.168-170a
C. 1.174-175
C. 1.192-196
C. 1.207b-209a
C. 1.211-212
V. 1.213 Punctuation: full stop to follow 'night'

Act IV

Scene 1

C. 1.19b-23a
C. 1.25-27
C. 1.38b-44a

Act IV Scene 2

V. 1.17 ape (apple)

Act IV Scene 3

C. 1.5-7a
V. 1.15b Ho, Guildenstern bring in my lord (Ho! bring in the lord)
V. 1.19 he (a')
C. 1.21-30
V. 1.38 He (A')
C. 1.58-61a

Act IV Scene 4

V. 1.4 Insert: Captain: 'Sir', at end of line
V. 1.24 it is ('tis)
V. 1.30 be wi' you (bye)

Act IV Scene 5

C. l.11-13
C. l.17-20
V. l.33 Insert 'Sh!' before 'Pray you mark'
V. l.40 ild (dild)
V. l.50 clothes (clo'es)
V. l.63 omit brackets
C. l.66
C. l.75b
C. l.91-93a
C. l.95b-111
C. l.113-115a
C. l.129
C. l.133a
V. l.137 world (world's)
V. l.141 father's death (father)
V. l.142 swoopstake (sweepstake)
C. l.144b-147a
V. l.151 pierce ('pear)
C. l.153
C. l.161-163
V. l.170 Down-a-down ("Adown adown")
V. l.199 be wi' you (bye you)
C. l.203-218

Act IV Scene 6

V. l.9 He (A')
C. l.13-15
C. l.22b-23a
C. l.23b and
C. l.31b-32
V. l.32 Insert 'bring me' at end of line*
V. l.33 these letters (them)*

Act IV Scene 7

C. l.5b-56 retaining the word 'Laertes', which is transposed to precede line 58
T. l.58-161 Transposed to follow Act V Scene 1 line 290. Within this transposed section the following cuts and variations occur:
C. l.72b-80a
V. l.80 Insert the word 'not' before 'two'
C. l.82-93
V. l.94 Who (He)*
C. l.99b-101a
C. l.109-123a
C. l.129
V. l.139 that (the)
C. l.148-149a
V. l.158 prepared (preferred)
V. l.161b Come, good Laertes (But stay, what noise?)
The transposed section ends here
V. To precede l.162, Claudius: 'How now, sweet queen!'
V. l.165 aslant (askant)

V. 1.167 There with (Therewith); come (make)
V. 1.171 coronet (crownet)
V. 1.172 clambering (clamb'ring)
V. 1.175 a while (awhile)
V. 1.176 tunes (lauds)
V. 1.182 Punctuation: She is drowned! (She is drowned?)
V. 1.189 of (o')

Act V

Scene 1

V. 1.1-2 that (when she)
V. 1.3 Insert 'and' before 'therefore'
V. 1.9 Insert: Second Clown: 'Se offendendo' at end of line
C. 1.12 and
V. 1.23 on't (an't)
V. 1.25 o' (a)
V. 1.29 Christian (Christen)
C. 1.47b-49a
C. 1.56b-57a
C. 1.57b And
V. 1.60 Insert: Second Clown: 'Who builds ...' at end of line
V. 1.66 at (in)
V. 1.76 it ('t)
V. 1.77 It (This)
C. 1.81-85
V. 1.87 chopless (chapless)**
V. 1.90 'em (them)
C. 1.95-114a
C. 1.134b-137a
V. 1.159 Insert 'I'' before 'faith'
C. 1.201b-206
V. 1.211 aside (awhile)
V. 1.226 rites (crants)*
V. 1.231 a (sage)
V. 1.267 thoult (thou't)
C. 1.288-293 The transposed lines from Act IV Scene 7, lines 57-161, are inserted here

Act V Scene 2

C. 1.1-55
C. 1.60-74
C. 1.87-90
C. 1.120b-124
C. 1.130b
V. 1.151 imponed (impawned)
C. 1.156-162a
C. 1.162b But on!
V. 1.165 imponed (impawned)
C. 1.186-206
V. 1.221 has (of). Insert 'of what' after 'aught'
C. 1.226-248
V. 1.341 have't (ha't)
V. 1.345 a while (awhile)

C. l.349-350a
V. l.353 the election (th'election)
V. l.355 the occurrents (th'occurrents)
C. l.365b-375a
V. l.377 the yet (th' yet)
C. l.384b-393a
V. l.399 body (bodies)*

The 1956 Production

The text used is The New Temple Shakespeare, edited by M.R. Ridley (London, 1952 reprint of 1934 edition). The Reaction Lines are included in appendix G.

Act I

Scene 1

V. 1.30 Stay you here (Sit down awhile)
V. 1.33 Stay we here (sit we down)
V. 1.37 to (t')
V. 1.43 it (a')
V. 1.45 Speak to (Question)
C. 1.55
V. 1.63 sleaded pollax (sledded Polacks)
V. 1.68 my (mine)
C. 1.70-112
C. 1.117-125
C. 1.136-138
C. 1.145-146
V. 1.154 The (Th')
C. 1.158-165

Act I Scene 2

V. 1.7 Insert at end of line: Lord of Council I: 'Tis justly said'
V. 1.9 The (Th')
C. 1.11
V. 1.14a Insert Reaction line A to follow 'wife'
V. 1.16 Insert Reaction line B at end of line
V. 1.33 Insert Reaction line C to follow 'subject'
V. 1.41 Insert at end of line: Lord of Council 2: 'Cornelius!'
V. 1.63 Insert at end of line: Laertes: 'My Lord!'
V. 1.67 sun (son)
V. 1.82 moods (modes)
C. 1.95-101a
V. 1.106a Insert Reaction line D
V. 1.129 solid (sullied)*
V. 1.132 Delete 'O' before final 'God'**
V. 1.167 Insert at end of line: Barnardo: 'My Lord'
V. 1.171 my (mine)
V. 1.175 for to drink (to drink deep)
V. 1.221 Insert at end of line: Barnardo: 'Indeed'. Marcellus: ''Tis true, my Lord'
V. 1.223 Insert at end of line: Marcellus: ''Tis very true, my Lord'. Barnardo: 'And so we did, 'tis true'
V. 1.225b given to Marcellus. Insert at end of line: Barnardo: 'Aye my Lord'
V. 1.227 given to Marcellus and Barnardo
V. 1.243 warrant (war'nt)

Act I Scene 3

C. 1.11-14a
C. 1.15-16a
C. 1.18
V. 1.20a Choose (Carve)*
C. 1.20b-24
C. 1.36-44
V. 1.51 Insert at end of line: Laertes'sattendant: 'My Lord'
V. 1.52b our (my). Half-line given to Ophelia
C. 1.53-54
V. 1.65 comrade (courage)
C. 1.73-74
V. 1.77 dulleth (dulls the)
C. 1.94b-95
C. 1.108-109a
C. 1.119
C. 1.120b-123a
C. 1.127b-131a

Act I Scene 4

V. 1.33 Their (His)*
V. 1.36 eale (evil)
V. 1.49 inerned (sic.) (interred)**
V. 1.53 Revisit'st (Revisits)
C. 1.74b-78
V. 1.82 artury (arture)**
V. 1.91 Insert at end of line additional dialogue:
Horatio: Hamlet
Marcellus: My Lord
Horatio: Hamlet
Marcellus: My Lord Hamlet

Act I Scene 5

C. 1.17-20
V. 1.33 roots (rots)
V. 1.38 for (but)
C. 1.44
C. 1.45 So to ... won
V. 1.45 Seduced (seduce)*
C. 1.53-54
V. 1.55 But (So)*
C. 1.68-70a
V. 1.84 pursuest (pursues)
V. 1.91a Insert: 'Hamlet' to precede 'remember'
C. 1.93 O fie!
V. 1.107a Insert at beginning of line: 'My tables'
V. 1.111 Adieu, Hamlet (Adieu, adieu)
C. 1.113c
C. 1.116b
V. 1.124 never (ne'er)
V. 1.132 Look you (prompt book insert)**
C. 1.150 Ha ha

T. 1.159 to follow 1.160
C. 1.161 try his sword
V. 1.179 not to do (do swear)*
V. 1.180 Insert at end of line: 'Swear'
V. 1.190 Insert at end of line: Horatio and Marcellus: 'Hamlet, Lord Hamlet, Hamlet...'

Act II

Scene 1

V. To precede 1.1 Insert: Polonius: 'Reynaldo, Reynaldo, Reynaldo, Reynaldo, Reynaldo'
V. 1.1 to my son, Laertes (him)
V. 1.7 Danes (Danskers). Insert 'there' to follow 'Danes'
C. 1.8a
C. 1.9 at what expense
C. 1.12-13
C. 1.20b-24a
C. 1.33-35a
C. 1.38-40
C. 1.42-43
C. 1.46-47a
C. 1.52
V. 1.53 Insert 'with you' after 'closes'
V. 1.54 t' (th')
C. 1.55 except 'and as you say'
C. 1.59 or so forth
C. 1.64-65a
V. 1.66 be wi' (bye)
C. 1.102-103a
V. 1.109 coted (quoted)
C. 1.111-114a

Act II Scene 2

V. 1. to follow 1.1 Insert: Queen: 'Welcome Gentlemen'
Rosencrantz and Guildenstern:'Your majesties'
V. 1.9 the (th')
C. 1.12
V. 1.20 is (are)
V. To follow 1.21a Insert: 'Your majesty', not ascribed in the prompt book, but presumably lines spoken by Rosencrantz and Guildenstern
V. 1.36 both (some)*
C. 1.66-67a
V. 1.71 the (th'). Insert Reaction Lines E at the end of the line
C. 1.73 threescore thousand crowns in annual fee
C. 1.74 And his
C. 1.75 So levied, as before,
V. 1.76 this (an)*
C. 1.79
V. 1.90 since (for)**
C. 1.103-104
C. 1.112 Thus

C. 1.113
V. 1.116 that (thou)*
C. 1.127b
C. 1.136 except 'If I had'
C. 1.137
C. 1.138 Or
C. 1.148
V. 1.151b Do you think 'tis this? (Do you think this?)**
V. 1.153 I'ld (I would)
C. 1.157-159a
V. 1.160 for (four)*
V. To follow 1.170 Insert: King: 'Madam come'
V. 1.174 Insert at beginning of line ' excellent'; fleshmonger (fishmonger)*
V. 1.182 God (good)*
C. 1.187-188
C. 1.189 fishmonger
C. 1.191 I'll speak to him again
C. 1.206-207
C. 1.210b-215
V. 1.216 My honourable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you
(My lord, I will take my leave of you)**
V. 1.219 Insert 'not' after 'will'
C. 1.239 that
C. 1.247-250
C. 1.260-272a
C. 1.281 Why
C. 1.288 except 'you'
C. 1.290b-291a
V. To follow 1.296 Insert: Rosencrantz: 'My Lord'
C. 1.299 but*
V. 1.307 What a piece of work (What piece of work)**
C. 1.312 no
V. 1.324a of (on)
C. 1.324b-329a
C. 1.333b-336
V. 1.337 Are they held in (Do they hold); were (did)*
V. 1.342 eyrie (aery)
C. 1.342 little eyases
C. 1.344 and so -365
V. 1.367 months (mows)
C. 1.376-379 yours
V. 1.388 Haply (Happily)
V. 1.392 o' (a)
C. 1.402 pastoral-comical-406 light
C. 1.414
C. 1.422-425
C. 1.429b-433 except 'Masters'
V. 1.441 caviare (caviary)
C. 1.444b-450a
C. 1.463-465
C. 1.499-501
V. 1.506 who (woe!)*
V. 1.523 whether (whe'r)
T. 1.540-541 'dost thou hear me, old friend' to precede 1.539
C. 1.543 a
V. 1.552 good (God)
V. 1.558 in's (in his)
V. 1.562 her (Hecuba)

V. 1.582 have (ha')
V. 1.591 scullion (stallion)*
C. 1.591 fie upon't
C. 1.592 hum
V. 1.603 the (a)
V. 1.604 To (T')

Act III

Scene 1

V. 1.1 circumstance (conference)*
C. 1.3-4
C. 1.13-15a
V. 1.28 two (too)
C. 1.43b-44a
C. 1.46b-55
V. 1.55b Shall we (let's)*
V. 1.71 The (Th')
V. 1.72 dispised (disprized) (New Temple edition: despised)
V. 1.74 the (th')
V. 1.86 pith (pitch)*
V. 1.109-110 commerce (converse)**
C. 1.129 all
C. 1.140 go
C. 1.146 too
V. 1.147 and amble (you amble)
V. 1.148 an you list (and you lisp)
C. 1.149 your
V. 1.155 The (Th')
V. 1.157 The (Th')
V. 1.161 tune (time)**
V. 1.162 feature (stature)**
V. 1.164 To (T')
C. 1.186b-188a

Act III Scene 2

C. 1.26b-28a
V. 1.30 the (th')
V. 1.34 abhominably (abominably)
C. 1.37b-43a
C. 1.50 What, ho!
C. 1.57b-60a
V. 1.63 S' (Sh')
C. 1.84-85
C. 1.130-133
C. 1.142-146
C. 1.163b-171
C. 1.180b-184
C. 1.189-192
C. 1.195-212
C. 1.217-220
V. 1.236 trapically (tropically)
C. 1.249-251

V. 1.261 He (A'); the (th'); for his (for's)
C. 1.276b-277a
V. 1.284 pacock (peacock)
C. 1.292b
C. 1.318 except 'commandment'
V. 1.321 Rosencrantz's line given to Guildenstern
C. 1.345 except 'Ay sir' - 348 except 'why'
V. To follow 1.346, Insert: Rosencrantz and Guildenstern: 'Ay sir'
V. 1.351 our (my)*
V. 1.388-390: Polonius: I will say so
Hamlet: By and by is easily said
Leave me friends
(New Temple edition: Leave me friends. I will say so)**
C. 1.400-402

Act III Scene 3

V. 1.6 lunacies (brows)
C. 1.8-23
V. 1.27 coming (going)*
C. 1.29b-33
C. 1.41-43a
C. 1.58
V. 1.59 'Tis often (And oft 'tis)
C. 1.62b-64a
V. 1.73 Prompt book: Now might I do it, pat, now he's praying
New Temple edition: Now might I do it, but now a' is a-praying
New Cambridge edition: Now might I do it pat, now a is a-praying
C. 1.75b-79
C. 1.91-92

Act III Scene 4

V. To follow 1.4 Hamlet 'Mother'
V. 1.5 warrant (war'nt)
T. 1.6 'mother' to follow 1.7a
'mother' to follow 1.7b
C. 1.22 help, ho!
C. 1.24
C. 1.37-38
C. 1.48b-51a
V. 1.66 feed and leave (leave to feed)
C. 1.71b-76a
C. 1.78-81a
V. 1.91 Prompt book: As will not lose their tinct'
New Temple edition: As will not leave there their tinct
New Cambridge edition: As will not leave their tinct
V. 1.108 The (Th')
C. 1.119-122a
C. 1.126-127a
C. 1.152b-155
C. 1.157-158
C. 1.161-165a
C. 1.168-170a
C. 1.179-180
V. 1.182 blowt (bloat)

C. 1.189-196
V. 1.201 is't ('tis)
C. 1.206-208 But
C. 1.209b-210

Act IV

Scene 1

C. 1.19b-23a
C. 1.25-27a
C. 1.40b-44a
V. 1.44b Insert: 'Gertrude' after 'O'

Act IV Scene 2

C. 1.1
C. 1.3a
C. 1.4
V. To precede 1.5 Insert: Marcellus: Here!
Guard: My Lord Hamlet is here
V. 1.17 ape (apple)
C. 1.21-23

Act IV Scene 3

V. To follow 1.2 Reaction lines F
V. To follow 1.3 Reaction lines G
C. 1.6-7
C. 1.9b-11a
V. 1.11b What news (What hath befallen)
C. 1.25-30
V. 1.35 downstairs (up the stairs)
C. 1.58-61a

Act IV Scene 4

V. 1.3 claims (craves)*
C. 1.21-22
V. 1.30 be wi' (bye)

Act IV Scene 5

V. 1.2 Gentleman's line given to First Lady
V. 1.4-7a lines given to First Lady
C. 1.5b-6a
V. 1.7b-9a lines given to Second Lady
V. 1.9b-10 lines given to First Lady
C. 1.11-13
V. 1.14-20 Horatio's and Queen's lines given to Second Lady
C. 1.17-18

C. 1.55 La
V. 1.60 Prompt book suggests a repeat of this line of the song
C. 1.65 An
T. 1.65 'hadst' to precede 'thou'
C. 1.78b-95a
C. 1.98a
C. 1.99-100
V. 1.101 The (Than)
C. 1.103-105
C. 1.110
C. 1.113 No
V. To follow 1.116a Reaction lines H (1st Section)
C. 1.116b-120
C. 1.132-134
C. 1.137-139a
C. 1.140-148
[V. 1.152a According to the Production Records, Reaction lines H, 2nd section, should follow this line, though not recorded in the prompt book]
C. 1.161-163
C. 1.170-173
C. 1.177-178
V. 1.182 must (may)**
V. 1.189 thou (a')
V. 1.190 thou (a')
C. 1.193-197
V. 1.199 be wi' (bye)
C. 1.208b-211a
C. 1.212-216
V. To follow 1.217 Insert: Voices off: 'What are they that would speak with me?
This way my Lord, they are in the cellerage, my Lord!'

Act IV Scene 6

V. 1.9 an (an't)
C. 1.24b-26a
C. 1.27b-29 tell thee
V. 1.32 then you must most instantly (do't the speedier that you may)

Act IV Scene 7

C. 1.2-5a
V. 1.7 criminal (crimeful)
C. 1.8-30a
V. To precede 1.30b Insert: 'Oh'
V. 1.37 This for (These to); this (these)
V. 1.45 you (your)
V. 1.57 didst (diest)
C. 1.59-60a
V. 1.60b thus (now)
C. 1.61-62a
C. 1.72b-75a
V. 1.75b And what is that? (What part is that?)
C. 1.75b my lord

C. 1.77-94
V. 1.95 All give (And gave)
C. 1.99b-101a
V. 1.101b you (his)
V. 1.104 you (him)
C. 1.115-117a
C. 1.118b-122a
T.V. 1.124 indeed (in deed) to follow 'yourself'
C. 1.132-133a
V. 1.133b Hamlet (he)
C. 1.134
C. 1.139
C. 1.141-145a
C. 1.148-149a
V. 1.149b it (this)*
C. 1.150
C. 1.152 that might hold - 153a
V. 1.158 prepared (preferred)
C.V. 1.161b Insert in its place: 'How now sweet Queen?' (printed in New Temple edition)
V. 1.165 aslant (askant) (New Temple edition: ascaunt)
V. 1.167 come (make)*
V. 1.171 coronet (crownet)*
C. 1.172
V. 1.176 tunes (lauds)
C. 1.186b-188

Act V

Scene 1

V. 1.1 First Clown referred to as Gravedigger
V. 1.3 Second Clown referred to as Carpenter
T. 1.3-4 'therefore make her grave straight' to follow 1.8
V. 1.9 se offendendo (so offended)**
V. 1.29 christian (christen)
V. 1.43 Insert: 'frame' after 'that'**
V. 1.60 to Yaughan (in)**
V. 1.85 Ay (It might)
V. 1.90 loggits (loggats)
V. 1.92 Beneath a shrouded (For and a shrouding)*
C. 1.93-114
C. 1.117-125
C. 1.134b-137a
V. 1.139 Insert 'all' after 'of'**
V. 1.143 were (was)*
V. 1.159 Insert: 'I' before 'faith'
V. 1.170 were (was)*
V. 1.171 were (was)*
V. 1.188 chamber (table)**
C. 1.201b-203 thus
C. 1.218 mark
V. 1.223 been (have)
C. 1.226-228
V. 1.231 a (sage)
V. 1.247 To (T')

C. 1.257b
C. 1.259
V. 1.268 thou'lt (thou't)
V. 1.270 esill (eisel)

Act V Scene 2

C. 1.1b beginning 'now ... - 74
C. 1.81
C. 1.87b-90
V. 1.102 or (for)
V. 1.103 Insert a dash to follow 'complexion'
C. 1.105 his majesty - 110
C. 1.113b beginning 'indeed ... - 130
C. 1.134-135
C. 1.138-140a You are not ignorant
V. 1.141 Insert at end of line: 'at his weapon'
C. 1.142-146
V. 1.153a hanger (hangers)
C. 1.153b-165a
V. 1.165b imponed (impawned)
C. 1.167 between yourself and him
C. 1.168 He had laid on twelve for nine
C. 1.186-206
C. 1.210 but
V. 1.221 has ought of what he leaves (of aught he leaves, knows)*
C. 1.224-237
C. 1.242b-248
V. 1.261 better (bettered)
V. 1.265 there (upon that table)
V. 1.280 Insert: Osric: 'Stay!' after King: 'Stay'
T. 1.282b to precede 1.282a
C. 1.290
C. 1.294
V. 1.298 Insert at end of line: Osric: 'Hold!'
T. 1.301a to follow 1.301b
C. 1.304-305
V. 1.306b swounds (swoons)
V. 1.307 Insert a third 'no'
C. 1.312
V. 1.313 hour's (hour of)
C. 1.315b-318a
C.? 1.340b as thou'rt a man (prompt book records: sometimes in sometimes out)
V. 1.343 I leave (live)
C. 1.349-350
C. 1.365b-373
C. 1.374b-375a
C. 1.378b-384a

The 1958 Production

The text used is The New Temple Shakespeare, edited by M.R. Ridley (London, 1957 reprint of the 1934 edition). The text is substantially the same as that used for the 1956 production. The textual variations between this edition and the standard text have not, therefore, been recorded again except where there is a variation between the two reprints and where an emendation in the prompt book demands clarification.

The tables include the Additional Cuts listed in the Production Records, some of which do not appear in the Prompt Book. Such omissions are marked P.R. (Production Records).

Act I

Scene 1

C. 1.26-29
V. 1.44 harrows (horrors)**
C. 1.70-125
C. 1.135-138
C. 1.149b-157
C. 1.162-164

Act I Scene 2

C. 1.11
C. 1.21
V. 1.23 bonds (bands)
C. 1.31b-33a
C. 1.36-38
V. 1.40 line given to Cornelius only
C. 1.46-50a
V. 1.82 shows (shapes)*
C. 1.95-106a
V. 1.171 mine (my)**
V. 1.175 to drink deep (for to drink)**
V. 1.177 pray thee (prithee)*
V. 1.198 vaste (waste)*
V. 11.225b, 227, 228b all given to Marcellus
V. 1. 231 How (What)*
V. 1.249 may (shall)*

Act I Scene 3

C. 1.11-16a
C. 1.18
V. 1.21 safety (sanity); Insert 'the' before 'health'
C. 1.22-28
C. 1.36-37 (P.R.)(R.C.?)
C. 1.38-44
V. 1.49 Whilst (Whiles)
C. 1.53-54
V. 1.63 to (unto)
V. 1.68 thine (thy)
C. 1.73-74
V. 1.77 dulls the (dulleth the)**
C. 1.94-95a
V. 1.95b Let me (I must)
C. 1.108-109a words in brackets
C. 1.117b-126
C. 1.127-131a (P.R.) (R.C.?)

Act I Scene 4

C. 1.26-28
C. 1.32
C. 1.36b-38a
V. 1.46 say (tell)
T. 1.52 'again' to follow 'thou'
C. 1.68-79
V. 1.82 artery (artere) (New Temple edition arture)

Act I Scene 5

C. 1.18-20
V. 1.22 Hamlet (List, O)
C. 1.29 with wings as swift
C. 1.30
C. 1.44-45a
C. 1.47-57
V. 1.63 mine (my)
V. 1.68 posset (possess)**
V. 1.80 'O, horrible! O, horrible!' given to Hamlet
V. 1.91 Hamlet (adieu, adieu)
V. 1.107 'my tables'. Repeated in New Temple Edition. Repeat cut in prompt book
V. 1.123 ne'er (never)
V. 1.132 I'll (I will)
V. 1.134 I'm (I am)
C. 1.161 by his sword
C. 1.177
V. 1.179 not to do (do swear)*

Act II

Scene 1

C. 1.12-13
C. 1.17b-19a
C. 1.21b-24a
C. 1.29-35a
C. 1.38-40
C. 1.51
C. 1.55
V. 1.56a Insert 'he' after 'There'
C. 1.56b-57a
C. 1.62
C. 1.64-65a
C. 1.76-77
C. 1.110b-114a
C. 1.115-116

Act II Scene 2

C. 1.5b-7a
C. 1.12
V. 1.20 are (is)**
C. 1.24
C. 1.46b-48a
C. 1.53b
C. 1.58b-85
C. 1.103-104
C. 1.126-128a
C. 1.131b-139a
C. 1.139b no
C. 1.157-159a
V. 1.160 for (four)*
V. 1.174 excellent (repeat deleted from New Temple edition)**
V. 1.182 God (good)*
C. 1.188 except 'daughter' - 191 this (P.R.)
C. 191 I'll speak to him again
C. 1.201b-205 (P.R.)
C. 1.211b-215
C. 1.216 honourable; most humbly
V. 1.218 Insert 'sir' after 'cannot'**
V. 1.238 What's the news? (What news?)**
V. 1.269 Line given to Rosencrantz only
C. 1.288 except the word 'you' - 291a
C. 1.294
V. 1.301 exercise (exercises)**
V. 1.305-306 appears no other thing (appeareth nothing) than (but)*
V. 1.308 faculty (faculties)*
C. 1.324b-329a
C. 1.333b-336
C. 1.342 little eyases
C. 1.344 'and so ...' - 365
C. 1.375b-379 yours
V. 1.393 so (then)*
C. 1.422-424

C. 1.429b-433 except 'Masters'
C. 1.442 from 'but it was ...' - 450a
V.? 1.461a gouled (gules) - not clear whether this is a variation or a recording error in the prompt book
C. 1.461b-465
C. 1.478b-480a
C. 1.497b-501
V. 1.506 O who (ah woe!)*
V. 1.523 bodykins (bodkin)*
V. 1.552 be with you (bye to you!)
V. 1.557 his (the)**
V. 1.558 in's (in his)
V. 1.562 to Hecuba (to her)**
V. 1.601 he but (a' do)
V. 1.604 the (a)

Act III

Scene 1

V. 1.1 circumstance (conference)*
C. 1.12-14a
C. 1.19 here
V. 1.27 onto (into)*
V. 1.33 will (we'll)**
C. 1.46b-54
V. 1.99 the (these)**
V. 1.146 Insert 'too' after 'paintings'**
V. 1.147 you amble (and amble)**
V. 1.148 an (and); lisp (list); and nickname (you nickname)*
V. 1.150 more marriages (mo marriage)
V. 1.159 music (music'd)**
V. 1.161 tune (time)**
V. 1.162 feature (stature)**
C. 1.170b-172a
C. 1.177-178a

Act III Scene 2

V. 1.26 of the which (of which)**
C. 1.58-60a
V. 1.67 commingled (co-medled)*
C. 1.115-119
C. 1.122
V. 1.128-129 two months dead (O heavens, die two months ago)*
C. 1.130 but - 133
C. 1.155-156
V. 1.162 your (our)**
C. 1.163b-171
C. 1.180 That's
C. 1.181-184
C. 1.187-192
C. 1.195-212
C. 1.217-220

C. 1.238-239 you shall see anon
C. 1.246-251
C. 1.276b-277a
V. 1.277b buy (get)*
V. 1.306 his (the)*
C. 1.335b-346 (P.R.)(R.C.?)
V. 1.388-390 Polonius: I will say so
Hamlet: By and by is easily said
Leave me friends
(New Temple edition: Hamlet: Leave me friends. I will say so)**
V. 1.392 breathes (breaks)**

Act III Scene 3

C. 1.5-23
C. 1.25-26
C. 1.29b-33
C. 1.62b-64a
V. 1.73 Now might I do it pat now he is praying (New Temple edition: Now might I do it but now a' is a-praying)
C. 1.82-84a
V. 1.91 gaming (game)*

Act III Scene 4

V. 1.1 Insert: 'Madam' at beginning of line; he (a')
V. 1.4 e'en (even)*
C. 1.6a
V. 1.7 Insert: Hamlet: 'Mother' after 'not'
V. 1.30 'twas (it was)*
C. 1.45b-51a
C. 1.71b-81a
C. 1.82-88a
V. 1.91 As will not leave their tinct (As will not leave there their tinct)**
C. 1.114
C. 1.119-122a
C. 1.142b-144a
C. 1.152b-155
C. 1.161-165a
C. 1.167b-170a
C. 1.180
C. 1.202-210
C. 1.212-213a except 'indeed'
V. 1.215 a foolish (a most foolish)**

Act IV

Scene 1

C. 1.17b-23a
C. 1.25-32a
C. 1.41-44a

Act IV Scene 2

V. To open the scene: Soldier: 'Lord Hamlet' (repeated three times)
C. 1.3-4
C. 1.16b-23

Act IV Scene 3

C. 1.7b-11a
C. 1.23-25
T. 1.34 'if' to follow 'indeed'*
V. 1.51 and so my mother (so my mother)**
C. 1.58-61a
V. 1.63 conjuring (congruing)*
V. 1.67 were ne're begun (will ne're begin)**

Act IV Scene 4

V. 1.3 Claims (Craves)*
C. 1.21-22
C. 1.27-29a

Act IV Scene 5

C. 1.5b-6a
C. 1.7b-13
V. 1.16 (New Temple edition gives line to Horatio)**
C. 1.19-20
V. 1.21 Insert 'Where Where' at beginning of line
V. 1.23 my (your)*
C. 1.36 all
C. 1.63 He answers
C. 1.75b
C. 1.79b-80a
C. 1.85
C. 1.88
C. 1.91-93a
C. 1.96-97a
C. 1.97b the door
C. 1.99-100
C. 1.103-105
C. 1.118b-120a
C. 1.132
C. 1.133b-135a
V. 1.147a Insert at end of line: 'Good Laertes'
C. 1.147b-148
V. 1.151 pierce (pear)*
C. 1.181b-182a
C. 1.208b-211a
C. 1.214

Act IV Scene 6

C. 1.20b-22a
C. 1.24b-26a
C. 1.29 farewell

Act IV Scene 7

C. 1.5b-24
C. 1.33b
V. 1.37 This (These)*
V. 1.41b it (them)*
V. 1.52 advise (devise)*
V. 1.56 didest (diest)
C. 1.60b-62a
C. 1.72b-80a
V. 1.80b Insert: 'Some' at beginning of line
C. 1.92b-93
V. 1.97 especially (especial)*
C. 1.99b-101a
C. 1.109-112 (P.R.)(R.C.?)
C. 1.113-122a
C. 1.122b (P.R.)(R.C.?)
V. 1.124 in deed (New Temple edition: 'indeed', following 'yourself')**
C. 1.128b
V. 1.147 Insert at end of line 'Soft let me see'
C. 1.148-154
C. 1.161b
V. 1.165 aslant (askant)(New Temple edition: 'ascaunt')
V. 1.167 come (make)*
V. 1.171 coronet (crownet)*
V. 1.176 tunes (lauds)*

Act V

Scene 1

V. 1.9 se offendendo (so offended)**
V. 1.12 argal (or all)**
V. 1.43 Insert 'frame' after 'that'**
C. 1.50-52 (P.R.)(R.C.)
C. 1.53-54
V. 1.60 in (to Yaughan)
C. 1.77b-90
C. 1.95-114a
C. 1.120-122
C. 1.123b
C. 1.134b-137a
V. 1.138 Insert: 'a' before 'grave maker'
C. 1.139 the
V. 1.167 lain (lien you)*
C. 1.175 second 'sir'
V. 1.187 chamber (table)**
C. 1.201-206
C. 1.215b

C. 1.224b-228
V. 1.241 treble (double)**
V. 1.248 Who (What)*
V. 1.257 wiseness (wisdom)**
V. 1.259 line given to Priest
T. 1.264 'Could not' to end of line
V. 1.270 nilis (probably nilus) (eisel)
V. 1.271 Insert 'thou' before 'come'**
T. 1.290 to follow 1.287

Act V Scene 2

C. 1.1-3
C. 1.5b-11
C. 1.16b-18a
V. 1.19 O (Ah)(New Temple edition: 'A')
C. 1.20-22
C. 1.27-31a
C. 1.37b
C. 1.40-44
C. 1.46
C. 1.50-53a
C. 1.58b-62a
C. 1.68b-70
C. 1.86b-90
C. 1.102 for - 103
C. 1.134-135
C. 1.137-139
C. 1.142-144
C. 1.145b-146
C. 1.150-165
C. 1.172-173
C. 1.184-206
V. 1.210 Insert 'But' at beginning of line**
V. 1.217 Insert 'a' before 'special'*
V. 1.221 has ought of what he leaves (of aught he leaves knows)*
C. 1.228-237
V. 1.248 till (all)**
C. 1.267-268
C. 1.272b
V. 1.279 the cup (drink)*
T. 1.281a 'Here's to thy health' to follow 1.279
V. 1.284 confess (confess't)*
C. 1.290
C. 1.309b
C. 1.316b-317a
V. 1.321 treachery (Treason! treason!)
C. 1.365b-375a
C. 1.378b-384a
C. 1.391-393a
V. 1.396 royally (royal)*

The 1961 Production

The text used is The Cambridge Pocket Shakespeare, edited by John Dover Wilson (London, 1958).

Act I

Scene 1

C. 1.73-78
C. 1.80b-95a
C. 1.101
C. 1.103
V. 1.104 Those lands (So by)*
C. 1.112
C. 1.117-125
C. 1.135-138
V. 1.140 Marcellus's line given to Barnardo*
C. 1.147-156
V. 1.157 First line of Marcellus's speech given to Barnardo*
C. 1.172-175

Act I Scene 2

V. 1.11 an (one); one drooping (a dropping)*
C. 1.21
C. 1.31b-33a
C. 1.36-38
C. 1.40-41
C. 1.52-56
C. 1.59-60
C. 1.98-106a
C. 1.168-173
C. 1.177 thee
C. 1.202b-206a
V. 1.220b Insert 'Ha!' at beginning of line

Act I Scene 3

C. 1.11-16a
C. 1.22-23
C. 1.33-42
V. 1.65 comrade (courage)*
V. 1.74 Are (Or of a)*
C. 1.94-97
C. 1.103-109
C. 1.114 almost; holy
C. 1.117b-120a
V. 1.124 Be it (Believe)*
C. 1.127b-131a

Act I Scene 4

C. 1.32
C. 1.34
C. 1.36b-38a
C. 1.54b-56
C. 1.71
C. 1.75-78a

Act I Scene 5

C. 1.32-34
C. 1.36b-38a
C. 1.47-54
C. 1.113c

Act II

Scene 1

C. 1.1-71a
C. 1.100-103
C. 1.110b-114a
C. 1.115-117

Act II Scene 2

C. 1.12
C. 1.23-24
C. 1.51-53
C. 1.58-86
C. 1.132-134
V. 1.137 winking (working)*
V. 1.142 precepts (prescripts)*
V. 1.151 wail (mourn)*
C. 1.157-159a
V. 1.163 the (an)*
V. 1.174 Insert: 'Excellent' at beginning of line
C. 1.221-222
T. Insert Act III Scene 1 1.56-88a to follow 1.220 (V. Act III Scene 1 1.86 pith (pitch))
C. 1.237-242
C. 1.247-250
C. 1.263-267
C. 1.275-277a
C. 1.290b-291a
T. 1.372 to follow 1.322
C. 1.324b-325a
C. 1.326b-328a
C. 1.329b-371
C. 1.374b-376a
C. 1.379 You are welcome
C. 1.384-389
C. 1.391 mark it

C. 1.392-393
C. 1.404b-405a
C. 1.406 for the law of writ and the liberty
C. 1.408-425
C. 1.442b-450a
C. 1.464-465
C. 1.497-501
V. 1.506 who (woe)*
V. 1.591 scullion (stallion)*

Act III

Scene 1

C. 1.3-10a
T. (1.56-88a transposed to follow Act II Scene 2 1.220)

Act III Scene 2

C. 1.8b-14
C. 1.24b-43a
T. 1.45-49 to follow Act III Scene 2 1.89
C. 1.58-60
C. 1.64
C. 1.66b-69a
C. 1.129b-136
C. 1.139b-146
C. 1.155-156
C. 1.165-171
C. 1.187-192
C. 1.195-198
C. 1.201-212
C. 1.217-220
C. 1.248-251
C. 1.317b-319
C. 1.323b-325a
C. 1.341-345
C. 1.348-353a
T. 1.376 'My Lord' to follow 1.374

Act III Scene 3

V. 1.6 dangerous (near's)*
V. 1.7a lunacies (brows) (Cambridge Pocket edition: brawls)
V. 1.7b line given to Rosencrantz
C. 1.11-23
C. 1.30-33
V. 1.79 hire (bait)
V. 1.91 gaming (game)*

Act III Scene 4

C. 1.7b
C. 1.45b-51a
C. 1.60-63
C. 1.71b-76a
C. 1.78-81a
C. 1.85b-88a
C. 1.88b Hamlet
C. 1.152b-155
C. 1.161-165a
C. 1.168-170a
V. 1.179 Thus (This)*
C. 1.188b-197a

Act IV

Scene 1

C. 1.1-12
C. 1.15-32
C. 1.38-45

Act IV Scene 2

C. 1.12 except 'own' - 23

Act IV Scene 3

C. 1.11a
C. 1.13b-15
C. 1.20-30

Act IV Scene 4

No emendations

Act IV Scene 5

C. 1.1-20
C. 1.91-96
C. 1.110
C. 1.138-147a
C. 1.152b
C. 1.205-216

Act IV Scene 6

No emendations

Act IV Scene 7

C. 1.5b-57

T. 1.58-161 to follow Act V Scene 1 1.293, with the following emendations:
C. 1.58b
C. 1.67b-80a
C. 1.82-90
C. 1.99-101a
C. 1.117b-122a
C. 1.129
C. 1.148-155
C. 1.161b

V. 1.165 aslant (askant)*
V. 1.167 There with (Therewith)*; come (make)*
V. 1.171 coronet (crownet)*
V. 1.176 tunes (lauds)*

Act V

Scene 1

C. 1.29-40
C. 1.46 except 'does well' - 57a
C. 1.57b And
C. 1.69-74
C. 1.77b-114a
C. 1.133b-137a
V. 1.166 Insert "Tis a great soaker' after 'dead body'
C. 1.198-210
C. 1.288-289
T. 1.293 To follow this line Act IV Scene 7 1.158-161. For emendations see Act IV Scene 7)

Act V Scene 2

C. 1.1-55
C. 1.58b-80a
C. 1.80b Peace
C. 1.87b-90
C. 1.114 for - 116
C. 1.118 except 'you' - 124
C. 1.126b-127
C. 1.129-130
C. 1.143b-144
C. 1.145b-146
C. 1.150-165
T. Insert to follow 1.178 lines 204-206
C. 1.184-203
T. 1.204-206 to follow 1.178 (see above)
C. 1.226-257a
T. 1.300b to follow 301a
C. 1.312
C. 1.365b-375a
C. 1.384b-393a

The 1965 Production

The text used is The Signet Classic Shakespeare, edited by Edward Hubler (New York, 1964 reprint of 1963 edition).

In compiling the tables for this production, three prompt books have been consulted: Stratford 1965, The Aldwych 1965-6 and Stratford 1966. Where the two later prompt books vary from the first, the abbreviations Ald. and St.66 have been used respectively, otherwise the emendation noted applies to all three.

In the Stratford 1966 prompt book, the pages of text have been affixed with selotape, which occasionally prevents a cut from being marked. Where this appears to have been the case, the instance has not been recorded; where there is room for doubt, the change has been included, and an O?, indicating a possible oversight, added in brackets.

Act I

Scene 1

C. 1.6-7
C. 1.26-29
C. 1.32
C. 1.43-45
C. 1.53
C. 1.62-63
V. 1.68 my (mine)
C. 1.74
C. 1.76-77
C. 1.83
C. 1.85
C. 1.87
C. 1.90-95a
C. 1.101
C. 1.102b-103a
V. 1.103b aforesaid (foresaid)* Not in St. 66
V. 1.117 feared (fierce)
C. 1.118-119
T. 1.122-125 to follow 1.116
C. 1.135-138
C. 1.149b-157

C. 1.162-163
V. 1.164 the (that)*
C. 1.172-173

Act I Scene 2

C. 1.21
C. 1.31b-33a
C. 1.44-46
C. 1.52-56
C. 1.59-60
V. 1.67 sun (son)
C. 1.70-71
V. 1.76 Punctuation: Seems, madam? (Seems, madam!)
V. 1.85 passeth (passes)*
C. 1.94b-106a
C. 1.106b We pray you
C. 1.171-173
C. 1.202b-206a
C. 1.215b-220a
C. 1.249-250

Act I Scene 3

C. 1.7-8
C. 1.11-14a
C. 1.15-16a
C. 1.18
V. 1.21 sanity (safety)** Insert 'the' before 'health'. Omitted from Ald. and St.66
C. 1.22-28
C. 1.34-35
C. 1.38-42
C. 1.53-54
V. 1.65 comrade (courage)
C. 1.73-74
V. 1.77 dulls the edge (dulleth edge)**; dulleth edge Ald. (O?)
C. 1.94-97
C. 1.107-109 R.C.
V. 1.108-109 Punctuation: Parentheses close at end of line 108 (Parentheses close at end of line 109a)
V. 1.109 Tend'ring (Running)
C. 1.117b-123a
C. 1.127b-131a

Act I Scene 4

C. 1.27-28
C. 1.36b-38a
C. 1.48b-51a
C. 1.60-61
C. 1.62a Ald. (O?)
C. 1.69-79

Act I Scene 5

V. 1.20 fretful (fearful)**
C. 1.36b-38a
V. 1.43 wits (wit)
C. 1.48-52
C. 1.68-70
V. 1.156b line given to Marcellus and Barnardo
V. 1.179 not to do (do swear)* Not changed in Ald.
V. 1.180 St.66 only: Insert 'Swear' at end of line

Act II

Scene 1

V. 1.3 marvell's (marvellous)
C. 1.8a Ald. only
C. 1.9 at what expense
C. 1.9 and finding: Ald.only (O?)
C. 1.10
C. 1.12-13
C. 1.17a And in part him: Ald. R.C. St.66
C. 1.17b-19a
C. 1.21b-24a
C. 1.29-35a
C. 1.38-40
C. 1.41 Mark you St.66
C. 1.42-43
V. 1.44 Insert 'Mark' at beginning of line* Not in Ald.
C. 1.55
V. 1.56a Insert 'he' before 'a' gaming'* Not in Ald. or St.66 (O?)
C. 1.56b-57a
V. 1.60 takes (take)* Not in Ald. or St.66
C. 1.62
C. 1.64-65a
C. 1.68-69 Not in Ald. (O?)
C. 1.76-77 R.C.
V. 1.96 o' doors (adoors)
C. 1.100-103
V. 1.110a wrack (wreck)
C. 1.110b-114a
C. 1.114b come Not in Ald.

Act II Scene 2

C. 1.5b-7a
C. 1.8-9
C. 1.11-14
C. 1.16
V. 1.20 is (are)
C. 1.21b-26a
C. 1.46b-48a
C. 1.65b-67a
C. 1.76b-77a

C. 1.79-80
C. 1.81-83
C. 1.103 Not cut in Ald. and St.66
C. 1.104 Not cut in Ald.
C. 1.120-122
C. 1.126b-128a
C. 1.133-134
T. 1.135 to follow 1.131
C. 1.137
C. 1.144-145
C. 1.148
V. 1.182 god (good)* Not in Ald.
V. 1.203 should (shall)
V. 1.204 be (grow)
C. 1.211-215
V. 1.216 Insert 'honourable' before 'Lord' and 'most humbly' before 'take'**
V. 1.217 Insert 'sir' before 'take'**
C. 1.247-250
C. 1.260-272a
C. 1.288b-291a Ald. cut ends at 'better' 1.290 (O?)
V. 1.312 Insert 'no' before 'nor'** Not in Ald.
V. 1.324a of (on)
C. 1.324b-329a
C. 1.333b-336
C. 1.344 these are now the fashion. St.66 only
C. 1.344 and so
C. 1.345-362
C. 1.364b-365
V. 1.367 mouths (mows)
C. 1.374b-379 yours
C. 1.404b-405 scene individable or poem unlimited
C. 1.406 for the law of writ and the liberty
C. 1.422-425 for
V. 1.425 Insert 'but' before 'look'*
C. 1.427 my
V. 1.441 caviar (caviary)*
C. 1.444b-450a
V. 1.452 when (where)
V. 1.459 that (this) St.66 only
C. 1.463-465
V. 1.494 Mars His (Mars's) Ald. and St.66
V. 1.528 abstract (abstracts)
V. 1.533 bodikin (bodkin)* Not in Ald. or St.66
V. 1.603 the (a)* Not in St.66

Act III

Scene 1

C. 1.3-4 R.C. St.66
C. 1.9-14a
C. 1.26-28a
C. 1.35-37a
C. 1.40b-42a
C. 1.54

V. 1.64 Punctuation: full stop follows 'wished'
V. 1.72 despised (disprized)
C. 1.144 O
C. 1.146, too
V. 1.147 and amble (you amble)
V. 1.150 more (mo)
V. 1.159 musicked (music)
V. 1.161 time (tune)
V. 1.165 Punctuation: Love? (Love!)
C. 1.177-178

Act III Scene 2

V. 1.3 our (your)
C. 1.26b-28a
C. 1.29b-31
C. 1.39-43a
C. 1.55-60
V. 1.67 commingled (co-medled)* Not in Ald. or St.66
V. 1.111 Ay (No)
C. 1.130 but - 133
C. 1.143 except 'him' - 144
C. 1.155-156
C. 1.165-169
C. 1.178-179
V. 1.180 Insert a second 'wormwood'**
C. 1.181-182
C. 1.187-192
C. 1.195-198
C. 1.203-212
C. 1.217-220
V. 1.241 wince (winch)** Not in Ald. or St.66
V. 1.252 Insert 'Pox!' before 'leave' Not in Ald. or St.66
C. 1.257-258
V. 1.271 strucken (stricken)
V. 1.272 heart (hart)
C. 1.275b-277a
V. 1.284 pajock (peacock)
V. 1.304 line given to Rosencrantz. St.66 Guildenstern deleted but Rosencrantz not added (O?)
C. 1.305-311
C. 1.318 except '-ment'
C. 1.349b-350

Act III Scene 3

C. 1.15b-22a
C. 1.29b-33a
C. 1.46b-50a
C. 1.62b-64a
V. 1.74 he is praying (a' is a-praying) Ald. he's a-praying
V. 1.79 hire (bait)
C. 1.81-82 Ald. only
V. 1.91 gaming, swearing (game, a-swearing) Not in Ald. or St.66

Act III Scene 4

V. 1.6 warrant (war'nt)
C. 1.37-38
C. 1.48b-51a
C. 1.71b-81a
C. 1.85b-88a
C. 1.119-124a
C. 1.142b-144a
C. 1.152b-155
C. 1.161b-162a
C. 1.167b-170a
C. 1.176-177
C. 1.189-196
V. 1.213 Punctuation: Mother, good night. Indeed, this counselor (Mother, good night indeed. This counsellor).

Act IV

Scene 1

C. 1.1-2
C. 1.17b-23a
C. 1.25-27a
C. 1.28
C. 1.40b-44a

Act IV Scene 2

V. 1.17 ape doth nuts (apple) Ald. ape
C. 1.21-22

Act IV Scene 3

V. 1.6a as (where)* Not in Ald.
C. 1.6b-7a Not in Ald.
C. 1.9b-10a
V. 1.15b Insert 'Guildenstern' after 'Ho'
C. 1.15b Ho! St.66 only
V. 1.15b my (the) St.66 only
C. 1.23-24

Act IV Scene 4

C. 1.4b-7a
V. 1.15 Go they (Goes it) St.66 only
C. 1.21-22

Act IV Scene 5

C. 1.5b
C. 1.6b
C. 1.7-13
C. 1.33 O, ho!
V. 1.50 clothes (clo'es)
V. 1.51 shut (dupped)* Not in Ald.
V. 1.64 'a' (ha')
C. 1.85
C. 1.88
C. 1.91-95a
C. 1.99-100
V. 1.101 The (Than)*
C. 1.103-105
C. 1.109
C. 1.111
V. 1.113a Line given to Switzer
V. 1.114 Line given to Switzer
C. 1.118b-120a
V. 1.120b What's (What is)* Not in Ald. or St.66
C. 1.120b Laertes
C. 1.133b-135a
C. 1.138-129a
V. 1.139b Insert 'But before 'Good'*
V. 1.142 swoopstake (sweepstake)
C. 1.144b-147a
C. 1.154b-157a
C. 1.161-163
C. 1.170-173
C. 1.177-178
C. 1.202b-208
V. 1.209 Insert: 'Now, good Laertes'. St.66 'But, good Laertes'*
C. 1.213-214

Act IV Scene 6

C. 1.24b-26a
C. 1.31 except 'Come'

Act IV Scene 7

C. 1.7-9a
C. 1.13
C. 1.19-24
C. 1.27-29a
C. 1.30a
V. 1.37 this (these) to the queen
C. 1.40-41a
C. 1.45 first asking your
C. 1.46 pardon thereunto
C. 1.48-49
V. 1.52 advise (devise)*
C. 1.57
C. 1.58b-60a
V. 1.60b If he's returned (if he be now returned)

C. 1.61-62a
V. 1.62b I'll (I will)
C. 1.63b
C. 1.72b-75a
C. 1.77-80
V. 1.83 do (can)* Not in Ald. or St.66
C. 1.85-89a
C. 1.92-94
V. 1.95 He (And)*
C. 1.99b-101a
C. 1.115-117a
C. 1.120b-122a
T. 1.124 'in deed' to follow 'yourself'
C. 1.128
V. 1.130 the (your)* Not in Ald. or St.66
C. 1.131
C. 1.132b-133a
V. 1.133b Hamlet (he)*
C. 1.133b being
V. 1.139 that (the)
C. 1.141b-146a
C. 1.146b that
V. 1.146b Insert 'but' after 'I'*
V. 1.146b Insert 'but' after 'if' Ald.*
C. 1.148-149a
C. 1.150
C. 1.152 that might hold - 153a
C. 1.153b soft
C. 1.154
V. 1.161 How now, sweet Queen? (But stay, what noise?)*
(The prompt book is not clear as to whether the words in brackets were reinstated and 'How now, sweet Queen?' followed them)
V. 1.176 tunes (lauds)
C. 1.185b-188a 1.185b-186 not cut in Ald.
C. 1.188b my lord! Not cut in Ald. or St.66
V. 1.190a drowns (douts); St.66 only: doubts

Act V

Scene 1

C. 1.12 and
V. 1.60 to Yaughan (in)**; Ald: to yon (O?); St.66: Get thee in
(unchanged from Signet edition)
V. 1.73 into (intil)
C. 1.78
C. 1.79 reaches
C. 1.81-88
C. 1.89 see't
V. 1.90 loggets (loggats)
V. 1.91 pickax (pick-axe)
C. 1.95-114a
C. 1.120-125
C. 1.134b-137a

V. 1.186-187 chapfall'n (chopfallen)
C. 1.201b-202
C. 1.203 thus
V. 1.223 been (have)
V. 1.247 old (told)**
V. 1.257 wisdom (wiseness)

Act V Scene 2

C. 1.5b-6a
C. 1.16a again
C. 1.16b-18a
V. 1.18b Insert 'there' before 'I'. Ald: Insert 'more' before 'I'*
C. 1.29-31a
C. 1.32b-37
C. 1.42
C. 1.45
C. 1.51-53a
C. 1.58b-62a
C. 1.62b Why
C. 1.68b-70
V. 1.73 interim's (interim is)
C. 1.87b-90
C. 1.113b-116 St.66: Cut begins at 1.114 'for'
C. 1.120b-124
C. 1.126b-127
C. 1.130 except 'tongue'
C. 1.134-135
C. 1.138-140a
C. 1.142-144
C. 1.145b-146
C. 1.157-158
C. 1.161 a. Not in Ald.
C. 1.161 I would - 165a
C. 1.174 here
C. 1.184-206
V. 1.220b-222 St.65: Since no man has aught of what he leaves, what is't to leave betimes?
Ald: Since no man of aught he leaves knows, what is't to leave betimes?
St.66: Since no man of aught he leaves, what is't to leave betimes? (O?)
New Cambridge and Signet editions: Since no man of aught he leaves knows, what is't to leave betimes? (New Cambridge omits the question mark)
C. 1.226-227
C. 1.232-237 (Ald. appears to include 1.229-231 in this cut. The sense, however, is in doubt if this is the case)
C. 1.243-244a
C. 1.245b-246
V. 1.247 Till I may have a (I have a) Not in St.66
C. 1.247 voice and
C. 1.261
V. 1.265 stoup (stoups)* Not in Ald. or St.66
V. 1.272 cup (cups)* Not in St.66
V. 1.297 sure (afeard)

V. l.306 swounds (swoons) Not in Ald. or St.66
C. l.312-313
C. l.316b-317a Not in Ald.. St.66: R.C.
V. l.320 do (to) St.66 only (Emendation not entirely clear)
C. l.371-375a
C. l.391-393a

The 1970 Production

The edition used is The Signet Classic Shakespeare, edited by Edward Hubler (New York, 1963).

Act I

Scene 1

C. 1.26-29
C. 1.32
C. 1.43b-45a
C. 1.47-49a
V. 1.60-61 Horatio's lines given to Barnardo
V. 1.62-63 Horatio's lines given to Marcellus
C. 1.64-68
V. 1.70-79a Marcellus's speech given to Horatio
C. 1.75-78
V. 1.79b Horatio's speech given to Marcellus
V. 1.82-96 Paraphrase:
Now certain lands from Fortinbras of Norway
Who, being dead, his son young Fortinbras
C. 1.99-101
V. 1.102 So (But)
C. 1.106-107
C. 1.109-111 R.C.
V. 1.117 feared (fierce)
C. 1.123b-125
C. 1.135-138
C. 1.154 extravagant and
C. 1.155b
C. 1.156
C. 1.165
C. 1.172-173

Act I Scene 2

C. 1.9
C. 1.13
C. 1.21
C. 1.31b
C. 1.32-33a
C. 1.33b And
C. 1.36-38
V. 1.40 Line spoken by Cornelius only
C. 1.44-46
C. 1.56
C. 1.59-60
V. 1.67 sun (son)
C. 1.69
C. 1.80-81
V. 1.82 shows (shapes)*

C. 1.90b-92a
V. 1.92b So (But)*
C. 1.98-106a
C. 1.110-112a
C. 1.127
V. 1.129 solid (sullied)*
C. 1.154-155
C. 1.159
C. 1.161 or
C. 1.170-173a
C. 1.182-183
C. 1.193-195
C. 1.198
C. 1.200
V. 1.202 armed (slow)*
C. 1.202b-206a
C. 1.209b-210a
C. 1.210b made, and good
C. 1.211b
C. 1.212
V. 1.216a its (it)*
C. 1.216b-217a
V. 1.218 as (then)*
C. 1.219
V. 1.220 It (And)*
C. 1.222-223
C. 1.226-230
V. 1.244-250 Paraphrase: Conceal this sight within your silence still
V. 1.253b line given to Barnado

Act I Scene 3

C. 1.8-9
C. 1.11-14a
C. 1.14b-15 R.C.
C. 1.15-16a
C. 1.17a
V. 1.21 sanity (safety)**
C. 1.22-28
C. 1.34-44
C. 1.52-54
C. 1.62-67
C. 1.69
C. 1.73-74
V. 1.77 dulls the edge (dulleth edge)**
C. 1.94-97
V. 1.108 close parenthesis at the end of the line
V. 1.109 Tend'ring (Running) Omit parenthesis after 'thus'
C. 1.117b-123a
C. 1.126b-131a
C. 1.133 so slander any moment leisure
C. 1.134 As to

Act I Scene 4

C. 1.9
C. 1.17b
C. 1.18 traduced and
C. 1.19b
C. 1.20a
C. 1.26-28
C. 1.32
V. 1.33 His (Their)**
C. 1.34
C. 1.36b-38a
C. 1.38b Look
C. 1.40-41
C. 1.46
C. 1.48b-51a
C. 1.54-56
C. 1.60-63a
C. 1.71
C. 1.74b-78a
C. 1.82-83
C. 1.84 R.C.
C. 1.89 Have after
C. 1.89b R.C.

Act I Scene 5

C. 1.17-20
C. 1.32-34
V. 1.36b-38 Paraphrase: Hamlet thou must know
V. 1.43a wits (wit)
C. 1.43b-45a
C. 1.45b shameful
V. 1.59 mine (my)*
C. 1.60
C. 1.65
V. 1.66 's (That); and (it)*
C. 1.69
V. 1.71 with (a)*
C. 1.77-78
C. 1.87 R.C.
C. 1.89-90
V. 1.91 Hamlet! (3rd adieu)*
C. 1.93b-95a
C. 1.103-104
C. 1.109
C. 1.122
C. 1.129-131
C. 1.141
C. 1.152-154
C. 1.163
V. 1.167 our (your)
C. 1.177
V. 1.179 this not to do (this do swear)*
V. 1.180 Insert 'Swear' at end of line
V. 1.187 But (And)*

Act II

Scene 1

V. 1.1 Laertes (him)
C. 1.1 Reynaldo
V. 1.3 marvell's (marvellous)
C. 1.8-10
C. 1.11 they do
V. 1.11 Insert 'whereon' before 'come'
C. 1.12
V. 1.13 and (you)
C. 1.21b-24a
C. 1.31b-35a
V. 1.35b Insert 'but' before 'my'
C. 1.38
C. 1.40-41a
C. 1.42 ever
V. 1.42 that suchlike (in the prenominate)
V. 1.43 is guilty of (you breathe of guilty). Insert 'you' after 'be'
C. 1.51
C. 1.55
V. 1.60 take (takes)
C. 1.61-65a
V. 1.68 for (in)*
V. 1.89 Insert 'with' before 'a'
C. 1.90
C. 1.96
V. 1.97 which (And)*
C. 1.100-103a
V. 1.110a wrack (wreck)
C. 1.110b-114a
C. 1.117

Act II Scene 2

C. 1.2
C. 1.7b-10a
C. 1.12
C. 1.13 That
V. 1.13 Insert 'now' after 'you'
C. 1.14
C. 1.16
C. 1.19-24
C. 1.28 dread
C. 1.30 except 'And'
C. 1.31 To
C. 1.44-45
C. 1.52
V. 1.53 here (in)*
C. 1.61a
C. 1.62b-73
V. 1.74 Gave (And)
C. 1.76b-77a
C. 1.79-80a
C. 1.81-83
C. 1.104
C. 1.107

C. 1.120 I have not
C. 1.121a
C. 1.126b-128a
V. 1.131 Insert 'Honourable' before 'I'
C. 1.133-135
C. 1.137-138
C. 1.145
C. 1.146 And
C. 1.127-159a
V. 1.160 for (four)
C. 1.161
V. 1.185 Insert 'not' after 'but'. A Semi-colon replaces the comma after 'conceive'*
V. 1.203 should (shall)
V. 1.204 be (grow). Insert 'as' before 'old'
C. 1.211b-215
C. 1.216 honourable. most humbly
C. 1.238-242 except 'what have'
C. 1.247-250
C. 1.260-272a
C. 1.275-277a
C. 1.287b-291a
C. 1.293-295
C. 1.297b-299a
V. 1.305-306 appears no other thing (appeareth nothing)*
V. 1.308 faculty (faculties)*
V. 1.312 'no' inserted before 'nor'**
C. 1.324a
C. 1.326b-329a
C. 1.333b-340a
C. 1.341b-342 pace
V. 1.342 eyrie (aery)
C. 1.344 so
C. 1.345b-359
C. 1.361-362
C. 1.364b-365
V. 1.367 mows (mouths)**
C. 1.374b-379
C. 1.385a Guildenstern
C. 1.385b
C. 1.386 ear a hearer
C. 1.388
C. 1.389 them, for
T. 1.391 'My lord' from 1.394 and insert at end of line
C. 1.405-406a
C. 1.416-423
V. 1.427 'my' inserted before 'old'**
C. 1.429a
C. 1.431-432 by the altitude of a chopine R.C.
C. 1.432b-436 straight
V. 1.436 Insert 'give us a speech' before 'give'
T. 1.442 'as I received it' to follow 'but'
C. 1.442 and others
C. 1.443-444a mine
C. 1.444b-450a
V. 1.452 when (where)
C. 1.452 It it live in

C. 1.453
V. 1.455 Insert 'Let me see, let me see' after 'Pyrrhus'*
C. 1.463-465
V. 1.471 Insert: Hamlet: 'Sh!' to follow 'discretion'
C. 1.475
C. 1.478b-481a
V. 1.481b But (For)*
C. 1.493-495
V. 1.496 Insert 'And' before 'Now'. Insert 'he' before 'falls'*
V. 1.506 who (woe)*
C. 1.511b-513
C. 1.514b
C. 1.517-518
C. 1.525b-526 this soon
V. 1.527 Insert 'my lord' before 'let'*
V. 1.528 abstract (abstracts)
C. 1.528 after
C. 1.529-530
V. 1.533 should (shall)*
C. 1.534 the less - 535a
V. 1.552 be wi' ye (bye to you)*
V. 1.591 scullion (stallion)
V. 1.601 but (do)*
V. 1.603 the (a)

Act III

Scene 1

C. 1.3
V. 1.4 This (With)*
C. 1.9-14a
V. 1.14b Insert 'then' after 'him'*
C. 1.16 Madam it so fell out that
V. 1.16 Insert 'were arrived' at end of line
C. 1.17a
C. 1.17b Of these
T. 1.17b 'we told him' to 1.16 so that 1.16 now reads:
We told him certain players were arrived
C. 1.19b-20a
C. 1.29-30 That he
V. 1.30 Insert 'Hamlet' before 'as'*
C. 1.35-37
V. 1.43a place (walk)
C. 1.43b-44a
C. 1.50
C. 1.54
V. 1.72 despised (disprized)
C. 1.117b-119 it
V. 1.147 you amble (and amble)**
V. 1.150 more marriages (mo marriage)*
C. 1.154
C. 1.156
C. 1.158-159
V. 1.160 To (Now)*
V. 1.161 time (tune)

C. 1.171 in quick determination - 172a
V. 1.171 Insert 'it' after 'have'
C. 1.174-178a
C. 1.186b
C. 1.187 (so please you)

Act III Scene 2

V. 1.3 out (your)**
C. 1.8b-14a
C. 1.28b-34
C. 1.38 for them - 43a
C. 1.58-60
C. 1.63 Sh'
C. 1.66b-69a
V. 1.73 Within the (There is a)*
C. 1.77
C. 1.83-85
C. 1.130 but - 133
C. 1.139b-146
C. 1.161-171
C. 1.180 That's
V. 1. Insert after 1.180 Attendant: 'Ssh'
C. 1.181-182
C. 1.187-209
C. 1.215-220
C. 1.241 except 'us not'
C. 1.251-254
V. 1.262 writ (written)*
C. 1.262 very
V. 1.270 Polonius' line given to 'ALL'
V. 1.271 strucken (striken)
C. 1.275b-276a
V. 1.284 pajock (peacock)
V. 1.300 Insert 'sir' after 'him'*
C. 1.306b-308
C. 1.309b-310a
C. 1.310b and
C. 1.347 O
C. 1.348-353a
C. 1.360b-362 except 'look'
C. 1.369b-370a
C. 1.374
C. 1.396-397
C. 1.401-402

Act III Scene 3

C. 1.5-7
V. 1.8-10 Guildenstern's lines given to Rosencrantz
C. 1.11-23
C. 1.25-27
C. 1.29-33a
C. 1.46b-50a
C. 1.59-60a
C. 1.62b-64a

C. l.67-69a
V. l.79 hire (bait)
C. l.91-92
V. l.95b Insert 'soft' before 'my'

Act III Scene 4

C. l.1b-4a
V. l.6b warrant (war'nt)
C. l.37-38
C. l.39b-40a
V. l.40b Insert 'Oh mother' before 'Such'*
C. l.45b-51a
C. l.52
C. l.56
C. l.59
C. l.71b-76a
C. l.80-81a
C. l.85b-88a
C. l.97-98
C. l.119-124a
C. l.126-127a
C. l.133
C. l.142b-144a
V. l.148 Whilst (Whiles)*
C. l.153-155
C. l.161-165a
C. l.168-170a
C. l.176-177
C. l.216

Act IV

Scene 1

C. l.1-5a
C. l.7b-8a
C. l.17-23a
C. l.25-27a
V. l.27b He (a')*
C. l.40b-44a

Act IV Scene 2

C. l.3
C. l.5 my lord
C. l.16b-19 swallowed
C. l.22b

Act IV Scene 3

C. l.5-11a
C. l.24 two dishes but to one table

C. 1.40-41a
C. 1.42a
V. 1.62 purpose (process)*
V. 1.63 conjuring (congruing)*
V. 1.67 Whate'er (Howe'er)*

Act IV Scene 4

C. 1.21-22
C. 1.25-29a
C. 1.48-50
C. 1.53b-56a R.C.

Act IV Scene 5

C. 1.8-13
C. 1.19-20
V. 1.40 yield (dild)*
V. 1.50 clo'es (clothes)
V. 1.64 'a (ha')
C. 1.79b-80a
C. 1.85
C. 1.88
C. 1.91-95a
C. 1.97 let them
C. 1.99-100
V. 1.101 The (Than)*
C. 1.103-105
C. 1.106 Choose we
C. 1.107-108a
C. 1.109
C. 1.112b-115a
C. 1.118b-120a
V. 1.120b Laertes
C. 1.131-132
C. 1.133b-135a
C. 1.138-139a
V. 1.142b swoopstake (sweepstake)
C. 1.144b-145 R.C.
C. 1.146-147a
C. 1.148b
V. 1.152b me (her)
C. 1.154b-157a
C. 1.161-163a
C. 1.168-169
V. 1.170 Laertes and Ophelia: 'Adown adown'
V. 1.171-172 'It is the false steward' repeated
C. 1.117b-178
C. 1.187-188
C. 1.202b-208
C. 1.214

Act IV Scene 6

C. 1.1-6
V. 1.14 this (these)*
V. 1.15 he (they)
C. 1.17b-18 sail
C. 1.21b
C. 1.22b-23a
C. 1.23b and; with as much
C. 1.24a
C. 1.25b-27a
C. 1.29 Farewell
C. 1.31b-33

Act IV Scene 7

C. 1.1 except 'Now'
C. 1.2 And
V. 1.2 must you (you must)
C. 1.3b
V. 1.4 who killed (which hath)
C. 1.4 noble; slain
C. 1.7-9a
C. 1.13
C. 1.19-24
C. 1.27-29a
C. 1.30a
C. 1.33b
C. 1.34b
C. 1.35
V. 1.37 This (These)* this (these)
C. 1.39b-41a
C. 1.51
V. 1.52 advise (devise)*
C. 1.54-57
C. 1.60b-62a
V. 1.62b Insert 'Laertes' before 'If'*
C. 1.72b-75a
C. 1.75b part
C. 1.76-95
C. 1.98-104
C. 1.111
C. 1.115-117a
C. 1.120b-122a
T. 1.124 'in deed' to follow 'yourself'
C. 1.128
C. 1.131-132
V. 1.139 that (the)
C. 1.142b-147a
C. 1.148-149a
C. 1.150
C. 1.152 that might hold
C. 1.153a
C. 1.153b soft
C. 1.157
C. 1.160
C. 1.161b

C. 1.162
C. 1.163a
V. 1.165 aslant (askant)*
V. 1.167 There with (Therewith)*. come (make)*
C. 1.177-179
C. 1.185b-188a
C. 1.188b my lord
V. 1.190 drowns (douts)

Act V

Scene 1

C. 1.3b-4a straight
C. 1.9
V. 1.10 But (For)
C. 1.12 and
C. 1.21 But
C. 1.26b-29 Christen
V. 1.34 he never bore arms (he had none)
C. 1.43-49
C. 1.52 and unyoke
C. 1.53 Marry, now
C. 1.56-57 except 'when'
V. 1.60 in (to Yaughan)**
V. 1.66 he (a') in (of)
C. 1.69-70
V. 1.73 into (intil)
C. 1.78b-79
C. 1.81-82 except 'This'
V. 1.85 Ay (It might)
V. 1.87 chapless (chopless)
C. 1.89 except 'see't
C. 1.90
V. 1.91 pickax (pick-axe)
C. 1.96b-97 except 'why does'
C. 1.100b-114
C. 1.129 For
C. 1.133b-137a
V. 1.157 five and twenty (thirty)
V. 1.167-168 this dozen year (three-and-twenty years)
V. 1.186-187 chapfall'n (chopfallen)
C. 1.189-190
C. 1.191
C. 1.201b-203 thus
V. 1.207-210 Sung rather than spoken
V. 1.212b that (this)*
C. 1.215b-216
C. 1.217b-219
V. 1.223 been (have)
C. 1.224b-228
C. 1.249b-251a
C. 1.255-257
C. 1.259a
C. 1.281
C. 1.288

Act V Scene 2

C. 1.2-3
C. 1.5b-7a
V. 1.7b Insert 'so' before 'let'
V. 1.9 teach (learn)*
C. 1.16-17a
V. 1.17b Insert 'there' before 'to'
C. 1.20-22
C. 1.24
C. 1.26-28
V. 1.29 villanies (villans)**
V. 1.30 Ere (Or)
C. 1.33-37
C. 1.40-45
C. 1.48
C. 1.50
C. 1.58b-59
V. 1.63 thinkst (think)*
V. 1.73 interim's (interim is)
C. 1.78-80a
C. 1.86-90
C. 1.114 for - 116
V. 1.119 dozy (dizzy)**
C. 1.134-135
C. 1.138-139
C. 1.140 You are not ignorant
C. 1.142-144
C. 1.145-146
C. 1.149 but
C. 1.147-148
C. 1.161 I would - 162a
C. 1.164b-165a
C. 1.174a
C. 1.186-206
C. 1.220 Since no - 222 betimes
C. 1.229-230a
C. 1.243-244a
C. 1.245a I
C. 1.245b-246 except 'Till'
V. 1.247 Insert 'may' before 'have'
C. 1.253-257
V. 1.265 stoup (stoups)*
C. 1.265 upon that table
C. 1.267
V. 1.272 cup (cups)*
V. 1.274 below (without)*
C. 1.296-297
C. 1.304
C. 1.312
C. 1.316b-317a
C. 1.321
C. 1.349
V. 1.350 Insert 'Makes' before 'This'*
C. 1.357a
C. 1.365b-375a
C. 1.385
V. 1.390 that will draw more (whose voice will draw on more)*
C. 1.392b-393a
C. 1.396b-399a

APPENDIX B

CAST LISTS

THE 1948 PRODUCTION

Horatio	John Justin
Ghost	Esmond Knight
King	Anthony Quayle
Queen	Diana Wynyard
Hamlet	Robert Helpmann
	Paul Scofield
Polonius	John Kidd
Osric	Noel Willman
Laertes	William Squire
Ophelia	Claire Bloom
Rosencrantz	John Van Eyssen
Marcellus	William Monk
Guildenstern	Douglas Wilmer
Bernardo	Robert Urguhart
Francisco	Paul Hardwick
1st Player, Lucianus	Michael Godfrey
2nd Player, King	Norman Mitchell
3rd Player, Queen	Ailsa Grahame
4th Player, Prologue	Michael Gwynn
5th Player, Clown	Alfie Bass
6th Player, Ingenue	Mairhi Russell
1st Councillor	Tom Kneale
2nd Councillor	Harold Kasket
1st Footman	Alexander Davion
2nd Footman	Clifford Williams
3rd Footman	Edmund Purdom
4th Footman	Alan Dipper
Fortinbras	Manfred Priestley
A Captain	Michael Gwynn
1st Soldier	Keith Herrington
2nd Soldier	David Wroe
1st Sailor	Keith Herrington
2nd Sailor	Norman Mitchell
1st Gravedigger	Esmond Knight
2nd Gravedigger	Alfie Bass
Priest	Julian Amyes
1st Lady	Lorna Whitehouse
2nd Lady	Heather Stannard
3rd Lady	Jean Fox
Page	Timothy Harley
Production	Michael Benthall
Scenery and Costumes	James Bailey
Duelling arranged by	Charles Alexis
Incidental Music	Brian Easdale
Stage Managers	Julia Wootten
	Robert Gaston

(Note: Two programmes were printed, one for performances with Paul Scofield as Hamlet, and one with Robert Helpmann as Hamlet).

THE 1956 PRODUCTION

Claudius	Harry Andrews
Hamlet	Alan Badel
Horatio	Anthony Nicholls
Polonius	George Howe
Ghost	Mark Dignam
Fortinbras	Basil Hoskins
Laertes	Andrew Faulds
Rosencrantz	John Garley
Reynaldo/Gravedigger	Patrick Wymark
Player 1/Soldier	Clive Revill
Voltimand/Osric	David William
Captain 1/Cornelius	Peter Cellier
Guildenstern	Emrys James
Marcellus/Soldier	Ron Haddrick
Francisco/Soldier	Robert Arnold
Lord of Council 2/Pirate 2/Dane	Leon Eagles
Attendant 1/Dane	Alan Haywood
Priest/Attendant on Laertes/Dane	George Little
Player King/Carpenter/Captain 4/ Dane	John Macgregor
Player 2/Bishop 2/Soldier/Dane	Rex Robinson
Barnardo/Attendant 2 (Sc. 16 & 17 only)	Paul Vieyra
Senior Attendant/Captain 2/Dane	Anthony Brown
Attendant 4 (Sc. 2, 6, 8 only)/ Attendant on Laertes/Soldier/ Dane	Thane Bettany
Attendant 5/Soldier/Dane	Gordon Gardner
Lord of Council 1	Brian Madison
Attendant 2/ Dane	Derek Mayhew
Bishop 1/Guard/Pirate 1/Soldier	Peter Palmer
Lord of Council 3/Dane	John Scott
Sailor/Player 3/Soldier/Dane	Michael Tate
Lord of Council 4	Ronald Wallace
Sailor/Player 4/Captain 3/Dane	Barry Warren
Gertrude	Diana Churchill
Ophelia	Dilys Hamlett
Lady 1	Stephanie Bidmead
Player Queen	June Brown
Lady 2	Virginia Maskell

(NB. Roy Patrick took over Michael Tate's roles on Saturday 8 September.)

Director	Michael Langham
Scenery and Lighting	Michael Northern
Costumes designed by	Desmond Heeley
Music	Alexander Gibson
Mime Play arranged by	Litz Pisk
Fight arranged by	Bernard Hepton and John Greenwood

THE 1958 PRODUCTION

Francisco	Paxton Whitehead
Barnardo	Julian Glover
Marcellus	Antony Brown
Horatio	Ron Haddrick
Ghost	Anthony Nicholls
Hamlet	Michael Redgrave
Polonius	Cyril Luckham
Claudius	Mark Dignam
Gertrude	Googie Withers
Cornelius	John Salway
Voltimand	Eric Holmes
Osric	Thane Bettany
Laertes	Edward Woodward
Ophelia	Dorothy Tutin
Reynaldo	Ian Holm
Rosencrantz	Paul Hardwick
Guildenstern	Michael Meacham
First Player	Patrick Wymark
Player King	Donald Layne-Smith
Player Queen	Stephanie Bidmead
Second Player	Ian Holm
Fortinbras	John Grayson
A Captain	Peter Palmer
Lady	Eileen Atkins
Courtier	William Elmhirst
Royal Servant	Roy Spencer
Sailor	Gordon Souter
Gravedigger	Donald Eccles
Sacristan	Julian Glover
Priest	Kenneth Gilbert

Courtiers, Ladies, Servants, Players, Soldiers, and Rebels:

Miranda Connell, Mavis Edwards, Pamela Taylor, Zoe Caldwell, John Davidson, Peter Anderson, Roger Bizley, Edward De Souza, Roy Dotrice, Stephen Thorne.

The Play directed by	Glen Byam Shaw
Scenery and costumes designed by	Motley
Music by	Antony Hopkins
Lighting by	Patrick Donnell
Fight arranged by	Bernard Hepton and John Greenwood
Mime arranged by	Norman Ayrton

THE 1961 PRODUCTION

Francisco	Sebastian Breaks
Barnardo	James Kerry
Marcellus	Clifford Rose
Horatio	Brian Murray
Ghost	Gordon Gostelow
Hamlet	Ian Bannen
Polonius	Redmond Phillips
Claudius	Noel Willman (Paul Hardwick took over 10 June.)
Gertrude	Elizabeth Sellars
Laertes	Peter McEnery
Ophelia	Geraldine McEwan
Rosencrantz	David Buck
Guildenstern	Ian Richardson
First Player	Tony Church
Player Queen	Terry Wale
Lucianus	Russell Hunter
Fortinbras	Barry Warren
A Captain	Brian Wright
Sailor	Bruce McKenzie
First Gravedigger	Newton Blick
Second Gravedigger	Russell Hunter
Priest	Michael Warchus
Osric	Gordon Gostelow

Courtiers, Ladies, Servants, Players, Soldiers

Narissa Knights, Rosemary Mussell, Georgina Ward, Michael Murray, Julian Battersby, Terry Wale, Paul Bailey, Richard Barr, Michael Blackham, Sebastian Breaks, Eric Flynn, Peter Holmes, Roger Jerome, Bruck McKenzie, Gareth Morgan, Ronald Scott-Dodd, Michael Warchus, Brian Wright

Directed by	Peter Wood
Designed by	Leslie Hurry
Music by	Alan Rawsthorne
Lighting by	John Wyckham
Fights arranged by	John Barton
Mime arranged by	Pauline Grant

THE 1965 PRODUCTION

	Stratford 1965	Aldwych 1965-66	Stratford 1966
Francisco	Alan Tucker		John Kane
Barnardo	Peter Geddis		
Marcellus	Jeffery Dench		
Horatio	Donald Burton		
Ghost	Patrick Magee	Brewster Mason	
Hamlet	David Warner		
Claudius	Brewster Mason		
Gertrude	Elizabeth Spriggs		Ann McPartland*[1]
Voltemand	David Waller		
Cornelius	Murray Brown		John Gulliver
Polonius	Tony Church		
Laertes	Charles Thomas		Michael Jayston
Ophelia	Glenda Jackson	Janet Suzman*[2]	Estelle Kohler
Rosencrantz	Michael Williams	John Bell*[3]	
Guildenstern	James Laurenson		Richard Moore
Reynaldo	Tim Wylton		Davyd Harries
First Player/ Player King	William Squire	Paul Hardwick	Patrick Stewart
Player Queen	Charles Kay		John Normington
Lucianus	Stanley Lebor		John Challis
Prologue	Tim Wylton		Davyd Harries
Servant	Murray Brown		Clifford Norgate
Fortinbras	Michael Pennington		Christopher Bidmead
Captain	John Corvin		
First Messenger	Robert Walker		Derek Steen
Sailor	Ted Valentine		
Second Messenger	Bruce Condell		Malcolm McDowell
First Gravedigger	David Waller		
Second Gravedigger	Robert Lloyd	John Kane*[4]	
Priest	Marshall Jones		Terrence Hardiman
Osric	Charles Kay		John Normington
Ambassador	Jeffery Dench		

Councillors, Servants, Soldiers (at Stratford, 1965)

Laurie Asprey, Ann Curthoys, Roger Jones, Paul Starr, Katharine Barker Frances de la Tour, David Jaxon, Madoline Thomas, John Bell, William Dysart, David Kane, Robert Walker, Pamela Buchner, Rogert Grange, Cliff Norgate, John Watts, Robin Culver, Terence Greenidge, Tina Packer.

Councillors, Servants, Soldiers (at The Aldwych, 1965-66)

Pamela Buchner, John Challis, Ann Curthoys, Frances de la Tour, William Dysart, Robert Grange, Terence Greenidge, Jonathan Hales, David Janson, Roger Jones, Estelle Kohler, Christopher Matthews, Sylvester Morand, Cliff Norgate, David Quilter, Madoline Thomas, Paul Starr.

Councillors, Servants, Soldiers, (at Stratford, 1966)

Christopher Bond, Robert East, Brian Gwaspari, Chris Malcolm, Ray Callaghan, Christopher Fagan, Phillip Hinton, Ian McDonald, Bruce Condell, Tom Georgeson, Sarah Hyde, Ann McPartland, Robert Davis, Robert Grange, Stanley Illsley, Peter Rocca, Frances de la Tour, Terence Greenidge, Peter Mair, Madoline Thomas, Angela Down.

Directed by	Peter Hall
Sets designed by	John Bury
Costumes in collaboration with	Ann Curtis
Assistant to the Director	Robin Phillips
Assistant to the Designer	Elizabeth Duffield
Music by	Guy Woolfenden
Duel arranged by	John Barton
Lighting by	John Bradley

*[1] Ann McPartland took over from Elizabeth Spriggs from 10 August - 3 September 1966.

*[2] Janet Suzman took over from Glenda Jackson after 4 November 1965.

*[3] John Bell took over from Michael Williams from 20 October 1965.

*[4] John Kane (previously known as David Kane) took over from Robert Lloyd from 20 October 1965.

(Note: When an actor has taken over a role, he retains it through the next phase of the production, unless otherwise indicated.)

THE 1970 PRODUCTION

King Hamlet	Patrick Barr
Queen Gertrude	Brenda Bruce
Prince Hamlet	Alan Howard
Claudius	David Waller
Polonius	Sebastian Shaw
Laertes	Christopher Gable
Ophelia	Helen Mirren
Voltemand	Barry Stanton
Cornelius	Clement McCallin
Osric	Peter Egan
A Gentleman	Martin Bax
Reynaldo	Ralph Cotterill
Rosencrantz	Phillip Manikum
Guildenstern	John Kane
Horatio	Terence Taplin
A Priest	Patrick Barr
Marcellus	Terrence Hardiman
Bernardo	Trader Faulkner
Francisco	Hugh Keays Byrne
A Sailor	Trader Faulkner
The Leader of the Players	Clement McCallin
A Gravedigger	Barry Stanton
His Assistant	Ralph Cotterill
Prince Fortinbras	Glynne Lewis
A Captain	Hugh Keays Byrne
The Player King	Patrick Barr
The Player Queen	Frances de la Tour
The Player Murderer	Clement McCallin
The Player Mutes	Glynne Lewis
	Hugh Keays Byrne
Director	Trevor Nunn
Designer	Christopher Morley
Lighting	John Bradley
Composer	Guy Woolfenden
Fight arranged by	Robert Anderson

APPENDIX C

Plays produced at Stratford-upon-Avon concurrent with the six Hamlet productions, together with details of Director and Set Designer. R indicates a revival or transferred production, TGR indicates a Theatregoround Production.

Production and Year	Director	Designer
1948		
Hamlet	Michael Benthall	James Bailey
King John	Michael Benthall	Audrey Cruddas
The Merchant of Venice	Michael Benthall	Sophie Fedorovitch
The Taming of the Shrew	Michael Benthall	Rosemary Vercoe
The Winter's Tale	Anthony Quayle	Motley
Troilus and Cressida	Anthony Quayle	Motley
Othello	Godfrey Tearle	Joseph Carl
1956		
Hamlet	Michael Langham	Michael Northern
The Merchant of Venice	Margaret Webster	Alan Tagg
Othello	Glen Byam Shaw	Motley
Love's Labour's Lost	Peter Hall	James Bailey
Measure for Measure	Anthony Quayle	Tanya Moiseiwitsch
1958		
Hamlet	Glen Byam Shaw	Motley
Romeo and Juliet	Glen Byam Shaw	Motley
Twelfth Night	Peter Hall	Lila de Nobili
Pericles, Prince of Tyre	Tony Richardson	Loudon Sainthill
Much Ado About Nothing	Douglas Seale	Tanya Moiseiwitsch
1961		
Hamlet	Peter Wood	Leslie Hurry
Much Ado About Nothing	Michael Langham	Desmond Heeley
Richard III	William Gaskill	Jocelyn Herbert
As You Like It	Michael Elliott	Richard Negri
Romeo and Juliet	Peter Hall	Sean Kenny
Othello	Franco Zeffirelli	Franco Zeffirelli

1965

Hamlet	Peter Hall	John Bury
Love's Labour's Lost	John Barton	Sally Jacobs
The Jew of Malta (R)	Clifford Williams	Ralph Koltai
The Merchant of Venice	Clifford Williams	Ralph Koltai
The Comedy of Errors (R)	Clifford Williams	John Wyckham and Clifford Williams
Timon of Athens	John Schlesinger	Ralph Koltai

1966

Hamlet (R)	Peter Hall	John Bury
Henry IV: parts 1 and 2 (R)	John Barton, Clifford Williams and Trevor Nunn	John Bury
Henry V (R)	John Barton and Trevor Nunn	John Bury
Twelfth Night	Clifford Williams	Sally Jacobs
The Revenger's Tragedy	Trevor Nunn	Christopher Morley

1970

Hamlet	Trevor Nunn	Christopher Morley
Measure for Measure	John Barton	Timothy O'Brien
Richard III	Terry Hands	Farrah
Dr Faustus (TGR)	Gareth Morgan	Stephanie Howard
King John (TGR)	Buzz Goodbody	Christopher Morley and Andrew Sanders
The Two Gentlemen of Verona	Robin Phillips	Daphne Dare
A Midsummer Night's Dream	Peter Brook	Sally Jacobs
The Tempest	John Barton	Christopher Morley and Ann Curtis

APPENDIX D

Shakespeare Memorial Theatre

Stratford-upon-Avon

(1948)

WARDROBE PLOT. (Abstracts)

PRODUCTION: Hamlet

PRODUCTION DATE: 23rd April 1948

Character	Costume
Hamlet (Scofield)	Black Frock Coat W/Coat 2 Pairs Trousers Two Shirts Two Black Stocks Reefer Jacket Short Bi Jacket Jersey Trousers Black Silk Belt 1 Fencing Shirt Large black Cape Cloak Rust Cloak Neck Ribbon Blue Sash 2 Pairs Black Cambridge Shoes
Hamlet (Helpmann)	Black Frock Coat W/Coat 2 Pairs Trousers 2 Shirts 2 Black Stocks Large Black Cape Cloak Reefer Jacket Short Bi Jacket Jersey Trousers Black Silk Belt Socks Fencing Shirt Black Tie Star Blue Ribbon Cross 2 Pairs Black Cambridge Shoes Top Hat

Character	Costume
King	Red Military Tail Coat Gold Collar and Cuffs Gold Epaulettes Overalls with gold stripes Gold and Red Waist Sash Sword Belt, Sword and Knott Blue Order Sash 5 Breast Orders 1 Sash Order 7 Medals and Ribbons D.K. Green Frock Coat Black Velvet Waistcoat Grey Trousers White Shirt 2 Imperial Collars Black Overcoat with Astrakan Collar and Cuffs Purple Satin Robe Grey gloves Star Cross and Ribbon White soft shirt Black Elastic Shoes Brown Wig
Polonius	Black Frock Coat Grey W/Coat Stripe Trousers White Shirt Three Collars Blue Velvet Tail Coat White W/Coat White Silk Stock Grey Trousers White Gloves White Shirt and Collar Gold Moire Sash Black Socks Black Shoes Wig and Sideboards
Laertes	Maroon Frock Coat Blue Fancy W/Coat Dark Grey Trousers Blue Stock White Shirt Black Overcoat with Frogs and Astrakan Collar with Hood Boots Top Hat

Character	Costume
Queen	Pale Green Velvet Dress, trimmed Royal Blue
	Dark Blue Silk Dress, trimmed jet & fur
	Red Velvet Dress, trimmed Lace and Black Net
	Blue Moire Sash & Star
	Black Sateen Skirt
	Black Velvet Coat
	Black Gloves
	Frilled White Nightdress
	Gold Silk Dressing Gown
	1 White Crinoline
	1 Black Crinoline
	2 White Petticoats
	Pearly Coral Necklace, Earrings, Bracelets
	Jet Earrings, Bracelets
	Diamond & Emerald Necklace, Earrings, Bracelets
	Head Jewels
	Gold Slippers
	Black Slippers
	Black Hat
Ophelia	White Silk Dress
	Blue Silk Dress
	Ragged Green Dress
	1 Crinoline
	Petticoat
	Blue Slippers
	Wig

APPENDIX E

PRODUCTION INFORMATION:
(1948)

AVERAGE PLAYING TIME

Act I

Scene	1	8 mins.
"	2	12 "
"	3	6 "
"	4	5 "
"	5	12 "
"	6	3 "
"	7	23 "

69 mins.

Act II

Scene	1	12 mins.
"	2	15 "
"	3	7 "
"	4	10 "
"	5	3 "
"	6	2 "
"	7	2 "
"	8	5 "

56 mins.

Act III

Scene	1	11 mins.
"	2	1 "
"	3	3 "
"	4	20 "
"	5	15 "

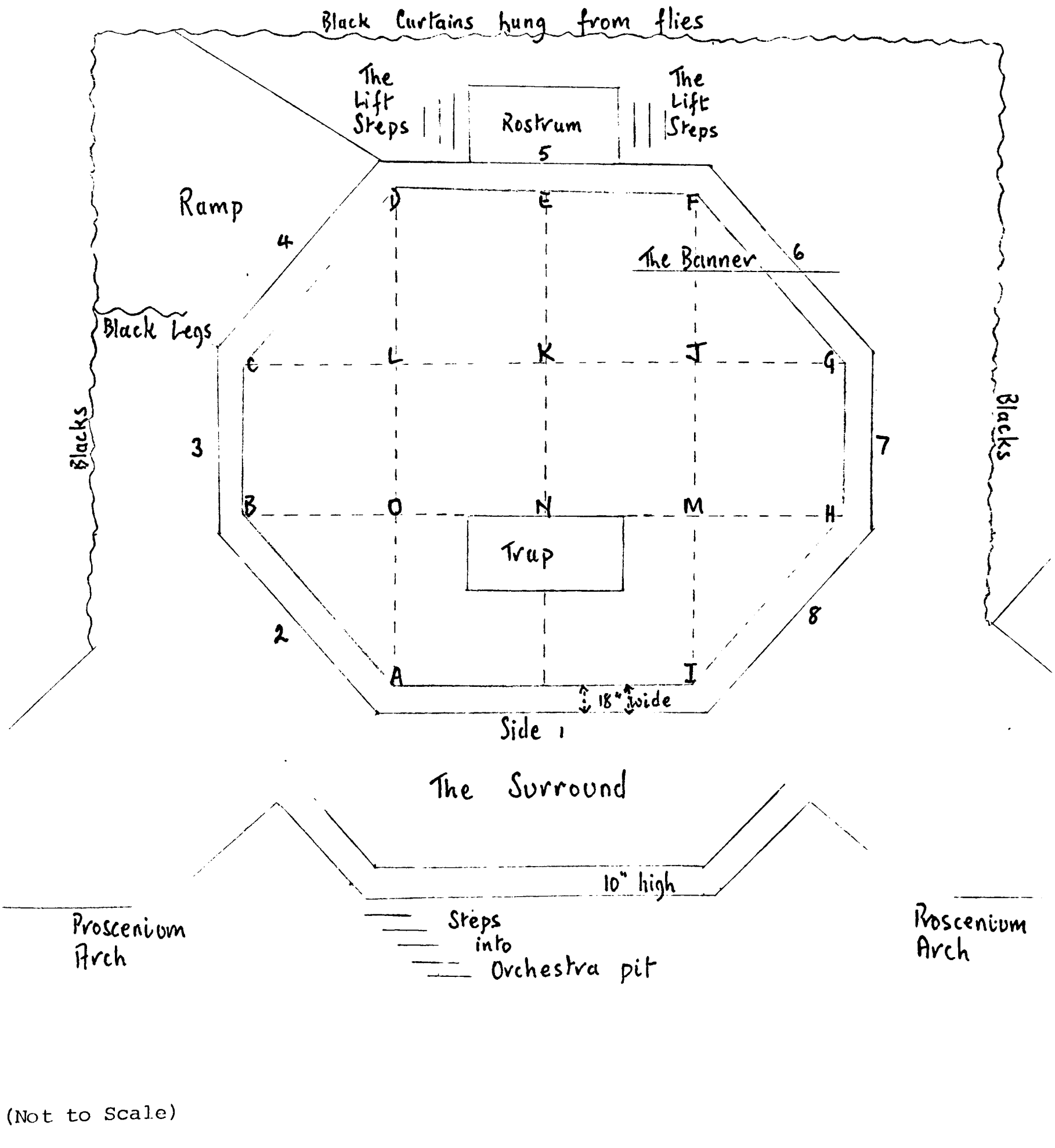
50 mins.

Total: 2 hours 55 minutes

APPENDIX F

STAGE SKETCH AND STAGE PLOT
(1956)

Stage Sketch



(Not to Scale)

"HAMLET"

STAGE PLOT

SET TO OPEN:

Forestage: Proscenium top and Assemblies covered in black corduroy velvet.

Assemblies: Backed with black velvet drapes.

Stage: 1) Octagonal wooden platform with black felted ramp leading off into upstage O.P. corner; trap (5' x 2'), 2'6" from d/s edge of platform.

2) Blue drape, on 12' high frame fixed to stage, on P.S., 5' upstage of Curtain line, on stage and off-stage edge of drape tacked to floor. Dummy (Polonius) hanging behind drape.

3) Floor surround covered in black felt.

4) Back lift down to carry platform centre, at stage level with steps down each side.

INTERVAL; 1) Small platform placed on P.S. lift steps at stage level to allow funeral procession to pass.

2) Take back out of on-stage edge of drape.

Scene 8 (During action a rostrum is brought on by actors from O.P. Assembly, fitting over O.P. downstage corner of octagonal platform, also removed later in the same scene. A red felt octagonal carpet also laid down and later removed by actors.)

Scene 16 As soon as Funeral Procession has entered, platform on P.S. of lift is removed from below stage.

Scene 17 On cue, during duel, back lift is raised with an actor on each side; when it stops they lift top part of centre platform up, forward and down to rest on upstage edge of wooden platform to form a ramp.

APPENDIX G

REACTION LINES

(letters A to H indicate position in script)

Scene 2 (Act I Scene 2)

A "Taken to wife".

Leon Eagles (L. of C. 2)*: May both your majesties be happy and prosperous.
Ronald Wallace (L. of C. 4): We wish you many happy days.
Brian Madison (L. of C. 1): God bless your majesty.
George Howe (Pol.): Long live our King & Queen.

B "For all our thanks"

George Howe: King Hamlet would have wished it so.
John Scott (L. of C. 3) & Voltimand talk.
Brian Madison: Most assuredly your majesty.
Leon Eagles & Ronald Wallace: Talk stops after 'Now follows'.

C "Are all made out his subjects"

Brian Madison: 'Tis marvellus (sic.) well writ.
Leon Eagles: Masterly.
John Scott: Splendid.

D "This must be so"

Leon Eagles: 'Tis true indeed.
'Tis well said your majesty.
1st Bishop: Exactly so your majesty

Scene 6 (Act II Scene 2)

E "To give the assay of arms against your Majesty".

L. of C. 1. 'Tis well done.
L. of C. 3. Wonderful news.
L. of C. 2. 'Tis good news.
L. of C. 4. It warms the cockles of my heart.
Polonius: Peace in our time.

Scene 11 (Act IV Scene 2)

F "How dangerous is it that this man goes loose."

1. He must needs be captured.
2. How dangerous indeed.
3. High to prison.
4. To prison send him.

G "Law on him."

L. of C. 1. But why my Lord?

Scene 13 (Danes) (Act IV Scene 5)

H "I pray you keep the door."

Antony Brown (Dane): No we will not.
Leon Eagles (Dane): No we'll stand by you.
Michael Tate (Dane): No we'll stay here
John Macgregor (Dane): We stay with you.
Barry Warren (Dane): We will be satisfied.

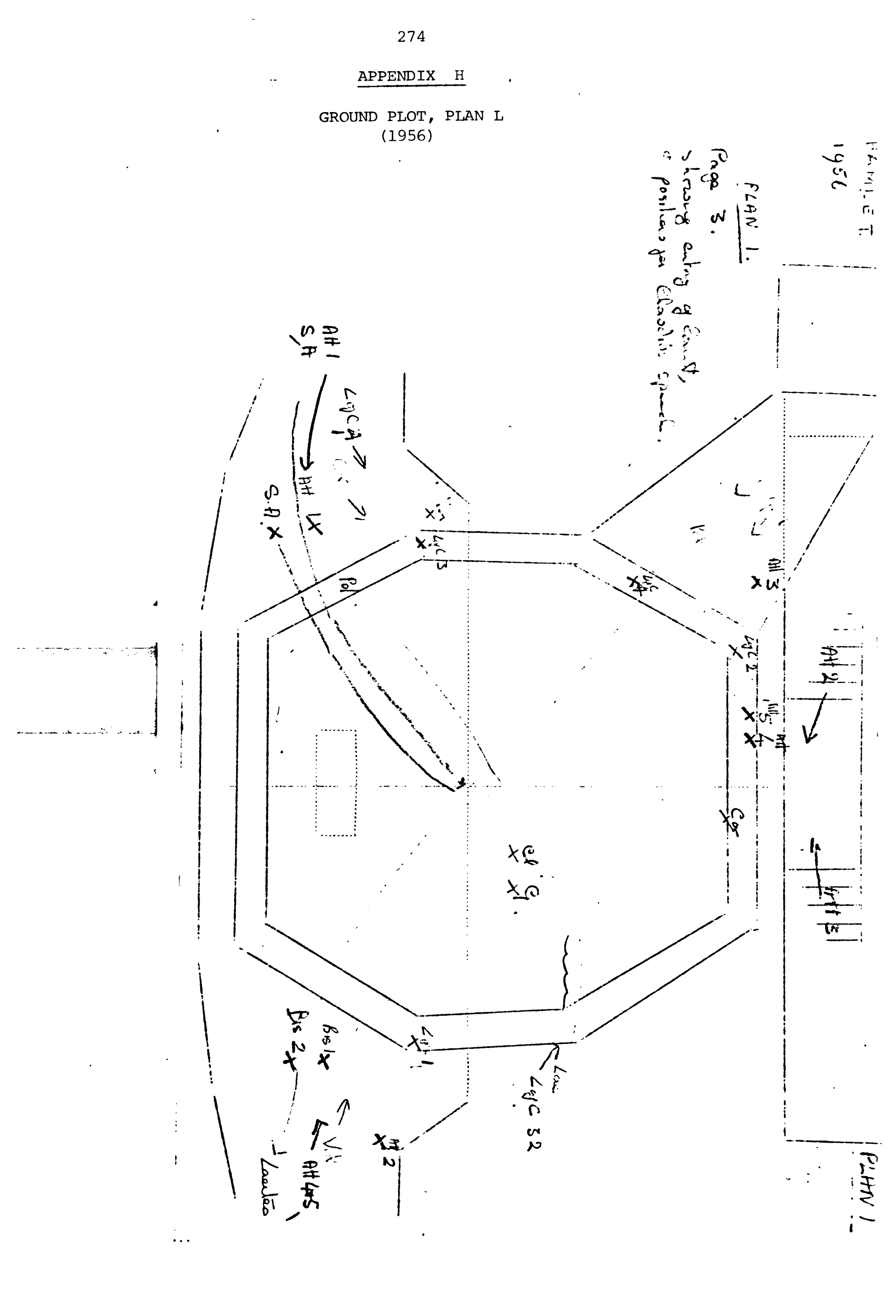
"As day does to your eye." (1.152a. New Cambridge Edition
1.150. New Temple Edition -
not marked in p.b.)

Guard: You shall not pass.
Alan Haywood (Dane): Let her pass
Rex Robinson (Dane): Let her come in.
Antony Brown (Senior Attendant): Now see what they have done to her.

*(Note: L. of C. = Lord of Council)

APPENDIX H

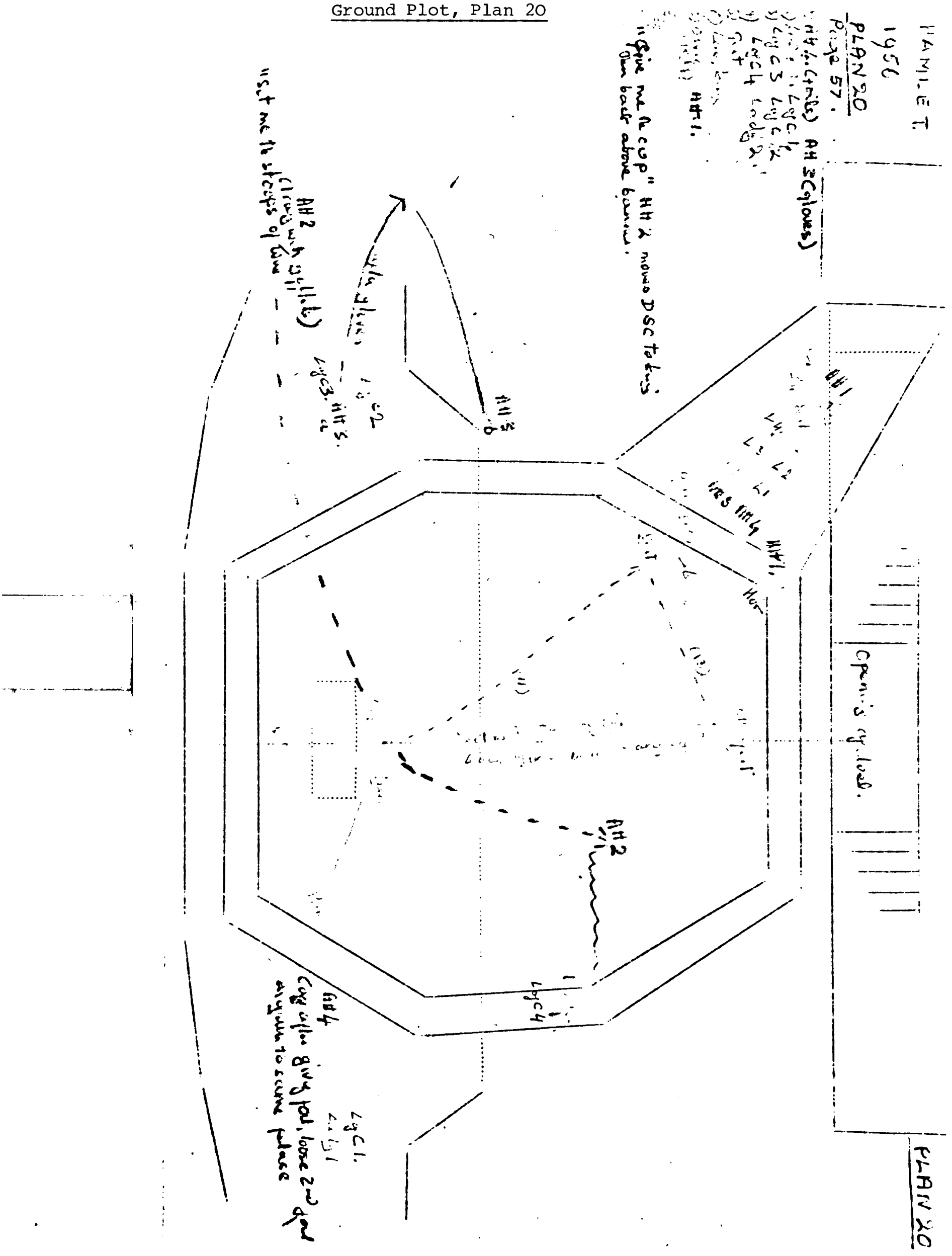
GROUND PLOT, PLAN L
(1956)



APPENDIX I

GROUND PLOT, PLAN 20 AND DUEL PLOT (1956)

Ground Plot, Plan 20



DUEL PLOT (1956)

After Salutes. Laertes u/s.

Hamlet lunges low left. Laertes parries and stops himself riposting

Hamlet lunges to left shoulder. Laertes parries quarte, and envelopes to low right.

Hamlet lunges to right cheek. Laertes parries sixte, and pushes away advancing (Laertes points to Hamlet's middle.)

Hamlet lunges and points. Laertes makes his point.

Hamlet u/s.

Hamlet feint to right shoulder, lunging to left shoulder.

Laertes counters in sixte and envelopes to low left. (Pause. Hamlet off lunge.)

Hamlet takes blade across to low right (Laertes') and lunges to left shoulder.

Laertes parries prime. (Retreat one step)

Hamlet lunges to left shoulder. Laertes parries quarte. Back one step.

" " " " " " " " " " "

" " " " " " " " " " "

Laertes envelopes to low right. Pause (Look from King?)

Laertes lunges to right shoulder: parried.

" " " " leg. Hamlet envelopes to low left.

Laertes (off lunge) attack to right shoulder. Hamlet steps out with left leg, and points under Laertes arm. Hit No. 2

Laertes u/s.

Laertes beat Hamlet's blade up, and lunge to right knee.

Hamlet parry and envelope right to left full circle

Hamlet lunges to left shoulder. Laertes parries prime and slices to middle left to right on lunge. Hamlet back.

Guard.

Hamlet lunges to left shoulder. Laertes ripostes. Hamlet ripostes.

Laertes parries quarte and envelopes to low line right. Pause.

Laertes lunge to right shoulder. Hamlet parries sixte and envelopes to low right.

Hamlet lunges over left shoulder. Laertes lunge past right middle. "Nothing neither way."

Stage 4. (Taken from the prompt book).

Hamlet swings Downstage of Laertes.

Osric tries to intervene, gets half-way, is stopped by Hamlet and breaks to below the banner.

Hamlet hits Laertes' foil onto ground, if not easily within his reach Osric picks it up and gives it to Hamlet on his way through.

Hamlet gives Laertes Hamlet's foil and keeps Laertes'.

Hamlet gives big swish down with foil and drives Laertes up ramp. They change sides up at the top so that Hamlet drives Laertes back downstage. As they come through, Attendant 4 smears Laertes' back with blood.

with trays of drinks. Barley serves U/S section of court.
Holmes serves D/S section. As show proceeds, drinks are finished and
Holmes + Barley collect empties.

Dumb-Show

Court Ctr.

Enter PQ + K Ham.
Q bows to K + is raised.
D/S P/S move.
U/S O/P move.
Circulate.
K. kneels.
Q removes crown + places it D/S O/P.
K. lies head D/S O/P feet D/S P/S. Exit Q.

Ham jumps up + pushes Holmes who is
stung Claudius D/S indicates murder to
Claudius. Returns to Upstage.

Ham. stands + X to behind Claud's exam.
Claud is talking to Queen.

Enter Luc.
Bends D/S O/P.
Kneels.

King laughs at Gert and
focusses on mime. Ham watches him
closely.

Lifts crown high + kisses it on.
Replaces it on ground.
Pours poison.
K. dies. Luc draws away.

Q re-enters.
Kneels by K. + grieves.
Luc. raises her.
Places jewels on her.

Luc. offers her the crown.
She takes it.
Luc kneels.
She crowns him.

Exeunt Q + Luc.

Ham. moves from above throne
to lie full length, propped up against
stage, staring at Claudius.

O, Luc + K take a call + 'exeunt'.

Luc exit P/S Ass.

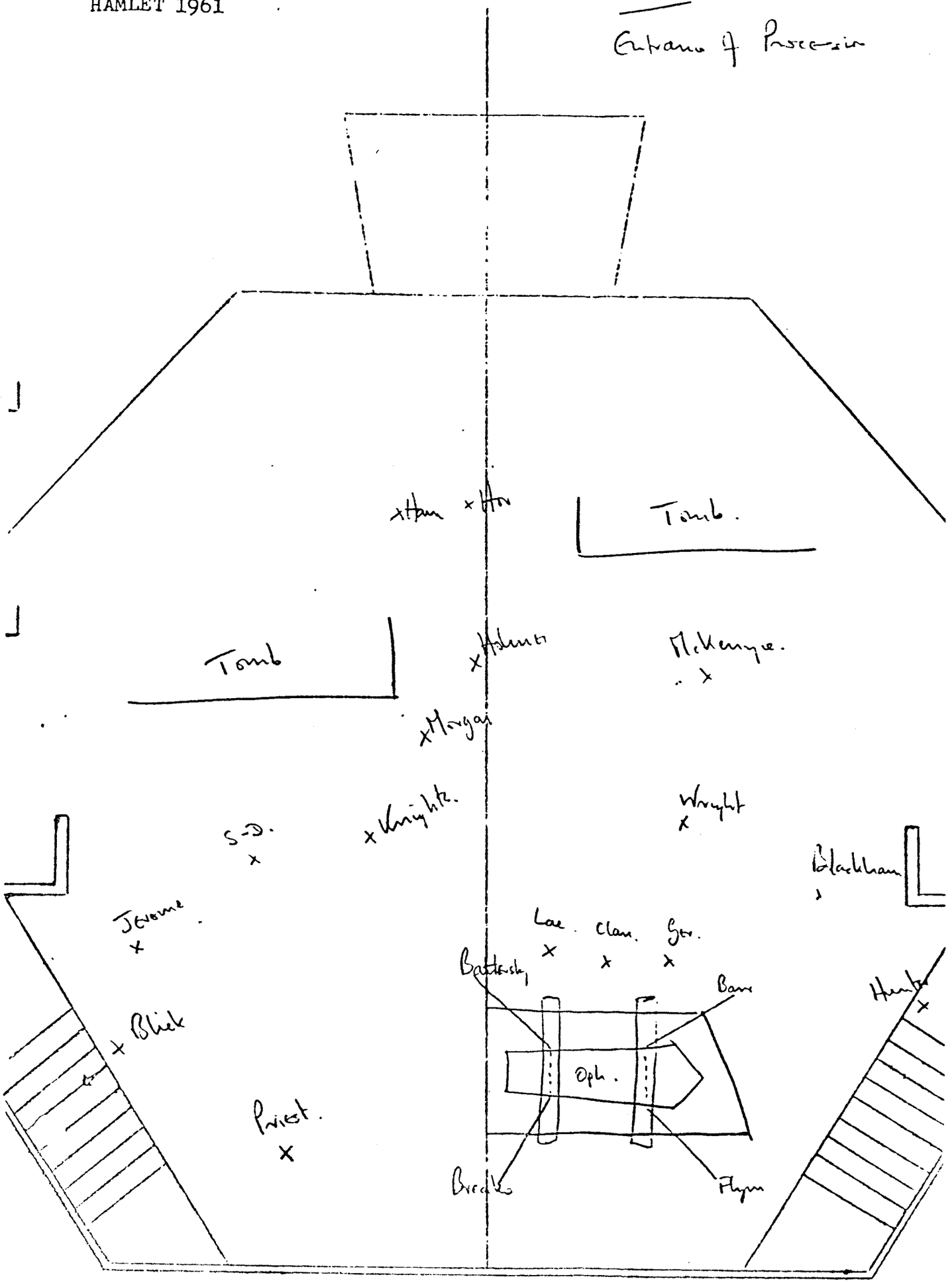
General applause
Ham + Claud have a "duel" of
clapping. Claud wins.

APPENDIX K

HAMLET 1961

Sc 15

Entrance of Procession



APPENDIX L

HAMLET

O/P PANEL CUES

Preset - Both US.and DS.panels showing BLACK WALL (No.1) onstage.

End of Act I sc.5 - Both panels revolve to No.2 showing BLACK FORMICA FRAME.

Act III sc.1/2 - Both panels revolve to No.1 showing BLACK WALLS.

(During Act III sc.2 - Take FRAME off (No.2) US.panel,and put UNDERSTAIRS on (No.2).
Take FRAME off (No.2) DS.panel,and put WARDROBE on (No.2).Put INNER WARDROBE on (No.3)).

Act III sc.2/3 - DS.panel revolve to No.2 showing WARDROBE.
US.panel - STET.

End of Act III sc.3- DS.panel revolve to No.1 showing BLACK WALL.
US.panel - STET.

(During Act III sc.4 - Take INNER WARDOBE off DS.panel.Put TARPAULIN on(No.3)).

Act IV sc.1/2 - US.panel revolve to No.2 showing UNDERSTAIRS.
DS.panel - STET.

Act IV sc.2/3 - US.panel revolve to No.1 showing BLACK WALL.
DS.panel revolve to No.2 showing WARDROBE.

(During Act IV sc.3 - Take UNDERSTAIRS off US.panel (No.2).
Take BLACK WALL & TAPESTRY off DS.panel (No.1).

Act IV sc.3/4 - Both panels revolve to No.3 showing OPEN POSTS.
US.panel revolve to No.4 showing OPEN POSTS.

INTERVAL

Put GRAVEYARD on US.panel (No.3) FORMICA FRAMES back on both panels (No.2)

Preset - Both US.and DS.panels on No.2 showing BLACK FORMICA FRAMES.

Act IV sc.5/6 - Both panels revolve to No.1 showing BLACK WALL.

Act IV sc.6/7 - DS.panel revolve to No.3 showing CASTLE.
US.panel - STET.

End of Act IV sc.7 - US.panel revolve to No.3 showing GRAVEYARD.
DS.panel revolve to No.1 showing BLACK WALL.

Act V sc.1/2 - US.panel revolve to No.1 showing BLACK WALL.
DS.panel - STET.

HAMLET

P.S.PANEL CUES

Preset - Both US.and DS.panels showing BLACK WALL (XXXX) onstage.
(US.panel -No.1,DS.panel - No.4,Spare black wall).

Act I sc.2/3 - DS.panel revolve to No.3 showing BOOKSHELVES.
US.panel -STET.

Act I sc.3/4 - DS.panel revolve to No.4 showing SPARE BLACK WALL.
US.panel - STET.

End of Act I sc.5 - DS.panel revolve to No.3 showing BOOKSHELVES.
US.panel - STET.
(During Act II sc.1 - Take SPARE BLACK WALL of DS.panel)

Act II sc.1/2 - Both panels revolve to No.2 showing BLACK FORMICA FRAME.

Act III sc.1/2 - Both panels revolve to No.1 showing BLACK WALLS.
(During Act III sc.2 - Take BOOKSHELVES off DS.panel and put TARPAULIN on.Put POSTS on DS.panel (No.4)).

Act IV sc.3/4 - Both panels revolve to No.4 showing CLEN POSTS.

INTERVAL

Take TARPAULIN off DS.panel (No3),and put GRAVEYARD on.

Preset - Both US.and DS.panels on No.2 showing BLACK FORMICA FRAMES.

Act IV sc.5/6 - Both panels revolve to No.1 showing BLACK WALLS.

End of Act IV sc.7 - DS.panel revolve to No.3 showing GRAVEYARD.
US.panel - STET.

Act V sc.1/2 - DS.panel revolve to No.1 showing BLACK WALL.
US.panel - STET.

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